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RHODE ISLAND SEEKS JOINT REGULATORY AUTHORITY WITH NRC ON USE OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received a proposal from the governor of Rhode Island for the State to assume part of the NRC's regulatory authority over the use of radioactive materials in Rhode Island.

Under the agreement proposed by Governor J. Joseph Garrahy, the NRC would relinquish to the state of Rhode Island the licensing and other regulatory responsibility for most users of byproduct materials, the source materials uranium and thorium, and small quantities of fissionable materials. Approval of the Rhode Island proposal would bring to 26 the number of "agreement" states which have established joint regulatory authority with the Commission.

The proposal, along with an assessment of the Rhode Island radiation control program, will be published for comment in the Federal Register once each week for four consecutive weeks beginning June 29. The Commission will consider any comments before taking final action. Interested persons may submit comments and suggestions to the Office of State Programs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Edgar C. Ashley, within 30 days after initial publication of notice in the Federal Register.

Before entering into an agreement with Rhode Island, the Commission must determine that the State's radiation control program is compatible with that of the NRC and that it is adequate to protect public health and safety. At present, there are about 50 NRC licenses in Rhode Island for the use of radioactive materials.

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