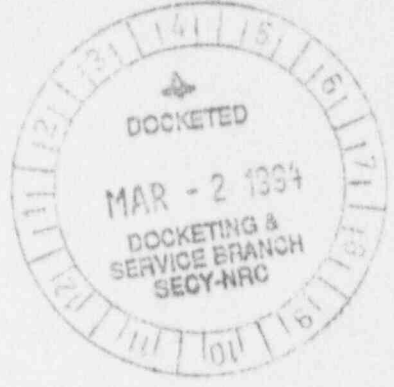


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(57 FR 32743)



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February 25, 1994

Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Attn: Docketing and Service Branch

Subject: Petition to NRC (Docket No. PRM-61-2) by New
England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution for
Rulemaking to Modify 10CFR61.55 Waste
Classification Rules

The following are comments on the petition for rulemaking regarding waste classification rules. The petition deserves favorable consideration, at least in part, for the reasons stated below.

1. The petition urges re-evaluation of the environmental impact of waste classification based on new information.
2. From work performed by the Vermont Low-Level Radioactive Waste Authority, a single category of nuclear power plant waste results in 99% of the radioactivity in Vermont waste, while comprising less than one-half of one percent of the volume. Specifically, this category is estimated to include 417,000 curies of a total of 421,000 curies. It consists of an estimated 872 cubic feet of a total of 446,924 cubic feet.

This category is identified as non-fuel reactor components and includes used control rods and reactor monitors. These components are easily able to be segregated. Non-fuel reactor components are classified as Class C.

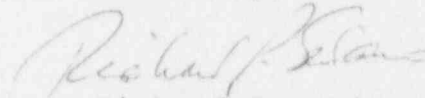
3. A likely result of re-evaluation of the environmental impact of waste classification would be reclassification of non-fuel reactor components as "greater than Class C." This would be a highly reasonable result for the following reasons:

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- a. The additional volume is a small increment to the waste volume already under federal jurisdiction.
 - b. The components are easily able to be segregated.
 - c. Most non-fuel reactor components remain in the reactor until decommissioning. Components removed during operation would be stored in spent fuel pools. While taking some additional space, these components are no greater storage hazard than the spent fuel itself.
 - d. The removal of such a great amount of radioactivity from the states' waste streams for such a small volume could assist the state processes established by the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.
4. It appears clear from the deliberations on the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985 that the Congress has the expectation that NRC has the authority to review its waste classification regulations as it deems advisable.

It is urged that favorable consideration be given to the petition for rulemaking toward the result that non-fuel reactor components are reclassified as "greater than C."

Sincerely,



Richard P. Sedano
Commissioner
State Liaison Officer