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Office of Administration
Mail Stop: TWFN-7-A60M
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

ATTN: Program Management, Announcements and Editing Staff

Subject: Interpretive Rule for Transfer of Very Low-Level Waste to Exempt Persons for Disposal (Docket ID NRC-2020-0065)

Office of Administration Staff:

Waste Control Specialists LLC (WCS) appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Draft Interpretive Rule for Transfer of Very Low-Level Waste to Exempt Persons for Disposal.

Over the past few weeks, tens of thousands of Americans have contracted COVID-19, the deadly disease caused by the new coronavirus that emerged in China in December 2019. As a result, state and local governments have enacted lockdowns and similar measures restricting travel, employers have directed employees to work remotely, and many families and individuals have 'self-isolated,' all to prevent the spread of the disease. Indeed, the NRC itself is taking a variety of measures to ensure the health and safety of employees and the public, by reducing access to NRC facilities by visitors, using remote means to hold meetings, and cancelling or postponing in-person meetings and training.¹

In a Federal Register Notice dated March 6, 2020, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requested that stakeholder comments be submitted by April 20, 2020. In light of the growing pandemic, and recognizing the difficulties it presents, WCS respectfully requests that the NRC extend the public comment period by the longer of an additional 60 days or 30 days following the suspension of other NRC working restrictions. This extension would allow WCS – and likely other stakeholders and interested members of the public - time to develop and submit thoughtful and thorough feedback. The NRC regularly extends rulemaking comment periods upon request, and has recently done so (1) where the issues presented in the relevant rulemakings

¹ NRC.gov., *NRC COVID-19 Update*, <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/faq/coronavirus.html> (last visited March 22, 2020).

and the potential effects thereof were complicated,² (2) to allow sufficient collaboration among stakeholders,³ and (3) where a portion of the comment period encompassed summer vacation at universities⁴ and the winter holiday season.⁵ Finally, extending the comment period will not have an adverse impact on safety or security at any licensed facility. Against that backdrop, WCS submits it is appropriate and in the public interest to extend the comment period here.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please contact me at dcarlson@wcstexas.com or 865-201-3191.

Sincerely,



David S. Carlson
President & COO

² NRC.gov., *NRC COVID-19 Update*, <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/faq/coronavirus.html> (last visited March 22, 2020).

² E.g., Draft Regulatory Basis; Extension of Comment Period, 84 Fed. Reg. 48309 (Sep. 13, 2019) (extending the comment period in response to the Nuclear Information and Resource Service, et al. Comment Period Extension Request (Aug. 26, 2019) (ML19241A279)); Revised Regulatory Basis; Extension of Comment Period, 84 Fed. Reg. 10269 (Mar. 20, 2019) (extending the comment period in response to the Nuclear Energy Institute Comment Period Extension Request (March 11, 2019) (ML19071A014)).

³ E.g., Draft Regulatory Basis; Extension of Comment Period, 84 Fed. Reg. 48309 (Sep. 13, 2019) (extending the comment period in response to the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Forum Comment Period Extension Request (Aug. 28, 2019) (ML19241A278)); Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking; Extension of Comment Period, 80 Fed. Reg. 80709 (Dec. 28, 2015) (extending the comment period in response to the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors Comment Period Extension Request (Dec. 3, 2015) (ML15338A271)).

⁴ E.g., Draft Regulatory Basis; Extension of Comment Period, 79 Fed. Reg. 42474 (July 22, 2014) (extending the comment period in response to (1) National Organization of Test, Research, and Training Reactors Comment Period Extension Request (June 26, 2014) (ML14206B154); and (2) Nuclear Energy Institute Comment Period Extension Request (June 20, 2014) (ML14174A421)).

⁵ E.g., Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking; Extension of Comment Period, 80 Fed. Reg. 80709 (Dec. 28, 2015) (extending the comment period in response to (1) San Luis Obispo County of Emergency Service Comment Period Extension Request (March 18, 2016) (ML16085A001); and (2) Vermont Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel Comment Period Extension Request (Dec. 11, 2015) (ML15348A410)).