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The NRC should adopt or reference the new ANSI standard N13.12, "Surface and Volume Radioactivity Standards for Clearance" in its rulemaking on Release of Solid Materials at Licensed Facilities. The provisions of ANSI N13.12, in the development for over 30 years, clearly applies to the need for a revised rule on release of contaminated or potentially contaminated solid materials. The standard is a consensus standard that has input from government agencies, the regulated community, public interest organizations, and the general public. The technical bases of this standard clearly provide an adequate margin of safety to workers and the public. An NRC rule that incorporates ANSI N13.12 would also be consistent with international standards that govern release of solid materials.

This standard fills a long-standing gap in the NRC's regulatory scheme which allows discharges of licensed materials to air and water in safe concentrations and quantities. Releases authorized by this standard would, in many cases, be below levels of naturally-occurring radioactive material that are outside the regulatory authority of the NRC.

George J. Vargo
P.O. Box 338
Richland, WA 99352-0338

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