

Comments Clerk
Radon-222, W-99-08
Water Docket (MC-4101)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC 20460

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON PROPOSED RULE, "NATIONAL PRIMARY DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS; RADON-222," 40 CFR PARTS 141 AND 142, 64 FR 59245, NOVEMBER 2, 1999

Dear Comments Clerk:

Enclosed are the consolidated comments from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC)'s Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, on the proposed rule for radon-222 in drinking water, which was published in the Federal Register on November 2, 1999. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to use a multi-pathway approach for setting a radon-222 indoor air exposure level by establishing specific limits for compliance of community water systems.

Although the proposed rule does not have a direct impact on NRC's programs, we are concerned that your regulatory analysis is silent on how the proposed limits for radon-222 in drinking water may be applied to other programs administered by EPA that could have significant impacts. In addition, while the EPA should be commended for its attempt to use a multi-pathway approach, the NRC found it difficult to understand the safety significance of the proposed rule, since radon in drinking water is an insignificant contributor (about 1 percent) to the overall dose to members of the public from radon in indoor air.

As you are aware, the NRC has informed EPA over the past several years that using a separate radiological standard for a particular medium, such as ground water, is inappropriate, and that it is more appropriate to use an all-pathways approach. The NRC recommends EPA consider implementation of a better targeted rule, through the Clean Air Act, that would require States to implement multi-media indoor air radon mitigation programs.

Comments Clerk

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We appreciate the opportunity to comment on EPA's proposed rule and we look forward to receiving responses and clarifications to the enclosed comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. F. Kane

William F. Kane, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: Comments on EPA
Proposed Rulemaking

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on EPA's proposed rule and we look forward to receiving responses and clarifications to the enclosed comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. F. Kane

William F. Kane, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: Comments on EPA
Proposed Rulemaking

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Parts 141& 142.wpd ***See previous concurrence**

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