

TH31 Potential Changes to the U.S. Low Level Waste Regulatory Framework

Recent developments in the US Low Level Waste (LLW) program are causing re-examination of USNRC's regulatory framework for LLW disposal. On June 30, 2008, the Barnwell LLW disposal facility closed to most US generators and 90 of the 104 operating reactors, causing them to have to store their Class B/C LLW for an indefinite period. At the same time, the emergence of commercial enrichment facilities in the US is creating a new waste stream of depleted uranium that was not considered when USNRC's LLW regulatory framework was implemented in 1981. In March 2009, the Commission directed the staff to promulgate a limited rulemaking that would address disposal of depleted uranium from enrichment plants. The Commission also directed the staff to begin a longer term rulemaking to risk inform the waste classification framework in USNRC's regulations. The waste classification system includes Class B/C wastes that currently have no disposal option for most U.S. generators. Separately, industry has proposed innovative approaches for mitigating the impacts of Barnwell's closure, including the blending of Class B/C waste to Class A, for which there is a disposal option. This panel will address these developments, including an international perspective on waste classification. Most foreign countries use the IAEA classification system, and USNRC will consider that approach in its longer term rulemaking. An important consideration in the classification approaches to be considered will be the impact of changes on current licensees, including both LLW generators and disposal facility operators.

Session Chair: Patrice Bubar, Director of the Environmental Protection and Performance Assessment Directorate, NRC/FSME

Speakers/Panelists:

Policy Perspectives on Changes to LLW Regulatory Framework
Presentation View *Handout View*

Ralph Andersen, Senior Director, Radiation Safety and Environmental Protection, Nuclear Energy Institute

International Perspectives on Radioactive Waste Classification
Presentation View *Handout View*

Didier Louvat, Head Waste and Environmental Safety Section, International Atomic Energy Agency

EPRI Research on Improvements to 10 CFR Part 61 Technical Basis
Presentation View *Handout View*

Sean Bushart, Senior Program Manager, Chemistry, LLW and Radiation Protection, Electric Power Research Institute

Disposal Facility Operator Perspective on LLW Regulatory Framework Changes
Presentation View Handout View

William Dornsife, Executive Vice President, Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Waste Control Specialists, LLC

DOE Approaches for Regulating LLW Disposal
Presentation View Handout View

Douglas Tonkay, Engineer, LLW and MLLW Team Leader, Department of Energy

Changes to 10 CFR Part 61 - Plans for Identifying and Evaluating Options
Presentation View Handout View

James Kennedy, Senior Project Manager, NRC/FSME

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