

**EPA Policy Statement; Planning Basis
for Emergency Responses to Nuclear
Power Reactor Accidents**

Purpose

This is a statement of policy with regard to an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) task force report on guidance for use in State and local radiological emergency response plans at nuclear power plants.

Background

The NRC received a request from the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, an organization of State officials, to "make a determination of the most severe accident basis for which radiological emergency response plans should be developed by offsite agencies." In response, an EPA and NRC task force was established which prepared a report entitled "Planning Basis for the Development of State and Local Government Radiological Emergency Response Plans in Support of Light Water Nuclear Power Plants," NUREG-0396, EPA 520/1-78-016, dated December 1978. Single copies of the report can be obtained by writing to the Director, Division of Technical Information and Document Control, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555.

Planning Basis

The major recommendation of the report is that Emergency Planning Zones (EPZ's) should be established around light water nuclear power plants. The EPZ for airborne exposure has a radius of about 10 miles; the EPZ for contaminated food has a radius of about 50 miles. Predetermined protective action plans are needed for the EPZ's. The exact size and shape of each EPZ will be decided by emergency planning officials after they consider the specific conditions at each site.

The report indicates that officials may have from one-half hour to several hours warning in which to implement protective actions before a release of radioactivity to the atmosphere.

The chemical and physical characteristics of those radionuclides which contribute most significantly to human exposure are presented.

EPA Policy

EPA concurs in and endorses for use the guidance contained in the task force report. It will be EPA's policy to incorporate its recommendations into all EPA emergency response guidance to State and local officials.