



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. 09-031

February 17, 2009

NRC APPROVES RULE INCORPORATING EPA STANDARDS FOR YUCCA MOUNTAIN REPOSITORY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved a final rule incorporating the Environmental Protection Agency's radiation protection standards for the proposed high-level waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nev., for the period beyond 10,000 years and up to 1 million years.

The rule, to be published soon in the *Federal Register*, makes NRC's regulations for the repository in 10 CFR Part 63 consistent with the EPA's revised standards, as required by law. The EPA's final standard was issued Sept. 30, 2008. The EPA's revised standards and the NRC's rulemaking were required by the July 9, 2004, ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, which overturned EPA's earlier standard that limited the compliance period to 10,000 years.

EPA published its proposed revisions Aug. 22, 2005, and NRC published a proposed rule adopting EPA's revisions and requesting public comment on Sept. 8, 2005. The *Federal Register* notice with NRC's final rule includes the NRC staff's responses to public comments on the proposed rule, as well as a regulatory analysis of the final rule.

The final rule retains EPA's standard dose limit for individuals of 15 millirem for the first 10,000 years after disposal and adopts EPA's 100 millirem dose limit for the period after 10,000 years and up to 1 million years. It will be posted on the NRC Web site here: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fedreg/notices/>. The rule will become effective 30 days following publication.

The Department of Energy submitted its application for the Yucca Mountain repository on June 3, 2008. The NRC formally docketed the application Sept. 8, and published a notice of opportunity to request a hearing on Oct. 22. Petitions to intervene were submitted in December, and in January, three Atomic Safety and Licensing Boards were established to review the proposed contentions for standing and admissibility. Information about the NRC's review of the Yucca Mountain application is available here: <http://www.nrc.gov/waste/hlw-disposal/yucca-lic-app.html>.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.