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***NRC CONSIDERS CHANGES TO REGULATIONS  
FOR REACTOR SAFETY ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS***

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering a rule change that would facilitate the process for utilities which seek small increases -- usually on the order of one percent -- to the authorized power level for nuclear power plants without compromising safety.

The result of the rule change would permit a utility to use its existing analyses of a plant's emergency core cooling system as a basis for safe operation at increased power, rather than prepare a new analysis that might cost several million dollars. Such a move, NRC believes, would eliminate an unnecessary regulatory burden without compromising safety.

At present, most licensees analyze emergency core cooling system capabilities assuming that the reactor would be operating at 102 percent power if a loss-of-coolant accident occurred. This requirement, applied since 1974, was intended to provide additional safety margin to assure adequate emergency cooling. It was believed necessary because of uncertainties in the accuracy of reactor power measurement.

Instrumentation is now available that can measure reactor power levels more precisely and, NRC believes, can eliminate the need for the current 102 percent power level assumption. NRC already has granted an exemption from this requirement to one utility using such updated technology.

The proposed action, which is being issued for public comment, would amend the current requirement in Appendix K, Part 50, of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Other provisions are in a *Federal Register* notice published October 1.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments by December 15 to the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff. Comments may also be submitted electronically through the NRC website at: [http://ruleforum.llnl.gov/cgi-bin/rulemake.](http://ruleforum.llnl.gov/cgi-bin/rulemake)

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