



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC PROPOSES PROBABILITY LIMITS FOR EXCLUDING UNLIKELY EVENTS FROM CONSIDERATION AT POTENTIAL WASTE REPOSITORY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to amend its regulations regarding a potential nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, to set out numerical values for deciding when a geological, hydrological or climatological feature, event or process is unlikely and therefore need not be considered in determining whether the repository would meet radiation dose standards for groundwater protection and human intrusion in NRC's regulations.

Unlikely events would still have to be considered in determining whether the repository would meet the overall 15-millirem radiation limit for protection of individuals.

Environmental Protection Agency standards, adopted by the NRC, require naturally occurring "unlikely" features, events, and processes or sequences of processes (such as volcanoes) to be excluded from determining compliance with radiation dose standards for groundwater protection and human intrusion (for example, if someone drills into the repository).

The proposed NRC regulation defines "unlikely" by stating that DOE's analysis of the expected repository performance in connection with the impacts of human intrusion and degradation of groundwater need not include consideration of features, events or processes that are estimated to have less than a 10 percent chance of occurring within 10,000 years of waste disposal.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments within 75 days of publication of a Federal Register notice, expected shortly. The comments may be mailed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.

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