



NRC NEWS

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NRC, STATES TO COORDINATE INCREASED CONTROLS OVER RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the 33 Agreement States are coordinating efforts to increase the control of radioactive materials that could potentially be of use to terrorists.

“We believe we have been successful in establishing an approach that achieves the common objective of the NRC and the Agreement States of enhancing controls over certain radioactive materials and enhancing the protection of public health and safety,” NRC Chairman Nils J. Diaz said. “This approach will leverage federal and state resources most effectively to increase protection and accountability of these materials.”

Under the Atomic Energy Act, the NRC has signed agreements with 33 states, relinquishing to the states responsibility for regulating radioactive materials used in academia, industry and medicine. The Agreement States regulate approximately 17,000 materials licensees, of which an estimated 1,650 will be affected by the new requirements. About 550 of the 5,000 NRC licensees in the remaining 17 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico also will be affected. The NRC retains exclusive authority over nuclear power plants, fuel cycle facilities and research reactors; those licensees are not affected by this decision.

Over approximately the next 90 days, affected NRC licensees will receive Orders from the agency spelling out increased controls for certain radioactive materials. Over the same period, individual Agreement States will issue their licensees legally binding requirements essentially identical to the NRC’s Orders. Materials covered by these requirements will be consistent with the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Code of Conduct for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Materials, which is the internationally recognized standard for categorizing and protecting radioactive materials.

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