



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO RELEASE DOCUMENTS REGARDING NUCLEAR FUEL SERVICES AND BWX TECHNOLOGIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has directed the agency staff to make publicly available many documents relating to the agency's oversight of Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) in Erwin, Tenn., and BWX Technologies (BWXT) in Lynchburg, Va., that were previously withheld for security reasons.

The Commission, in a Staff Requirements Memorandum dated Aug. 31, overturned an August 2004 policy that considered most information regarding the two facilities as "official use only." That policy was initiated in response to post-9/11 concerns that certain publicly available documents contained security-sensitive information.

Under the Commission's new directive, the staff will review and release key documents relating to NFS and BWXT dated Jan. 1, 2004, or later. Information determined to meet agency guidelines for "Sensitive Unclassified Non-Safeguards Information," or SUNSI, will be redacted. Future documents relating to NFS and BWXT that contain SUNSI are to be redacted and released to the public.

Approximately 1,900 documents relating to NFS and BWXT generated since Jan. 1, 2004, are not currently publicly available. The Commission directed the staff to review and release a subset of these documents that will give the public a record of the NRC's oversight of these facilities. In addition to licensing actions and orders, the subset is to include inspection reports, licensee performance reviews, enforcement actions, event reports and other documents the staff determines to be relevant.

Reviewing and redacting the existing documents covered by the Commission directive is expected to last until May 2008. Documents will be made available during that time as they are reviewed and approved.

NRC staff has already identified 60 licensing actions and six orders relating to NFS, BWXT and other fuel cycle facilities that were withheld in accordance with the 2004 policy and 2005 guidance on SUNSI but can now be made public. Redacted versions of those documents will be made available in the coming weeks through the NRC's ADAMS online documents system, and members of the public may have an opportunity to request hearings on some past licensing actions.

On July 19, the NRC announced the release of a number of documents, including a confirmatory order issued earlier this year, regarding a March 2006 spill of high-enriched uranium at

NFS. Notice of an opportunity to request a hearing on the order was published July 30 in the *Federal Register*. The agency received six requests for a hearing, which are now before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board for consideration.

NRC staff intends to hold a public meeting Sept. 17 in the vicinity of NFS to discuss the licensee's recent performance. Details of that meeting will be announced separately.

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