



NRC NEWS

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NRC RECEIVES CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED MIXED OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received an application to construct a mixed oxide (MOX) fuel fabrication facility on the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site near Aiken, South Carolina. The agency will conduct an initial review of the application to ensure it is complete, and if so, will begin a more detailed technical review in about a month.

The Department of Energy plans to construct a MOX fuel plant through a contract with the consortium of Duke Engineering & Services, COGEMA Inc., and Stone & Webster (known as DCS). If NRC grants the license, DCS could build and operate a MOX facility that would convert surplus weapons-grade plutonium oxide, supplied by the Department of Energy, into fuel for use in commercial nuclear reactors. The plutonium in the fuel would be used in a once-through process, to render it essentially inaccessible and unattractive for weapons use. Commercial nuclear power plants in the United States currently use uranium as fuel; the mixed oxide fuel would be a combination of uranium and plutonium.

A separate announcement will describe the process for the environmental review and a schedule for public meetings, which will be held to allow interested members of the community to provide information and comments to assist the agency in its environmental evaluation.

An opportunity for a hearing will be announced in a Federal Register notice following NRC's acceptance review of the application.

A copy of the application will be available on the agency's web site, at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/NMSS/MOX/index.html> and through ADAMS, the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System.

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