

DOCKETED
USNRC

From: "Stephen Kent" <skent@kentcom.com>
To: <secy@nrc.gov>
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Subject: proposed change on radioactive waste regulations

June 9, 2003 (8:57AM)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

This is to file a citizen comment on proposed changes in NRC regulations which would release radioactive nuclear by-products into the manufacturing stream.

Radioactive by-products of the nuclear industry have no place in the consumer product stream and residential construction. In fact, it should be the NRC's job to insure that no such material contaminates the environment and products we use. Contemplating changing standards to approve the entry of such materials is a nod to the nuclear industry that the NRC is abdicating its responsibilities to the public, and serving the nuclear industry as its true constituency.

Not only am I not in favor of such a rule change, I will personally help further activist work against it and help finance legal action to block it.

Radioactive concrete must not be used to make basements or just bridge abutments. No radioactivity should be permitted in the metal used for pipes, dental braces, intrauterine devices, belt buckles, frying pans and tableware. Radioactive soil must not be used for agricultural land or playground fill. Radioactive asphalt has no place in parking lots and bike paths. Nor does it belong in hazardous waste facilities never intended to take radioactive materials. It must be disposed of in appropriately designed and secure facilities, at a cost born by the nuclear industry.

Instead of relaxing the regulatory barrier that restricts the flow of radioactive materials into such applications, the NRC has a responsibility to tighten regulatory vigilance as the nuclear industry expands. It should account for all radioactive waste products of the nuclear industry disposed of so far, and assiduously track health and environmental effects, subject to review by independent scientists.

The point is not lost on the public that man-made radionucleotides are not comparable to naturally occurring ones, and the old saw about nuclear waste "products" being compared to background radiation or dentist x-ray machines is a red herring designed to give false reassurance to citizens downstream. In fact, man-made isotopes bond to DNA and certain human organs in ways that naturally occurring radioactive materials, to which life on earth has adapted, do not.

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the very proposal to allow more of these materials to penetrate consumer and residential spheres, and promise an

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organized, effective fight against the bureaucracy which in this way
seeks
to enrich the nuclear industry at the expense of public health and safety.

Sincerely,

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