



NRC NEWS

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Office of Public Affairs

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NRC PROPOSES INCREASED SECURITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PORTABLE GAUGES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to amend its regulations to increase security requirements for portable gauges that require a specific license.

Portable gauges are devices containing small amounts of radioactive material encapsulated in stainless steel that can be hand-carried. They are used to determine physical properties, such as density and moisture content of soil, concrete, and other materials, in applications such as road construction.

The proposed rule was developed to enhance the current level of security and control for portable gauges by reducing the opportunity for theft. It would require portable gauge licensees to use a minimum of two independent physical controls to secure portable gauges from unauthorized removal whenever portable gauges are not under the control and constant surveillance of the licensee. NRC staff expects that the physical controls used would form tangible barriers and be designed and constructed of material suitable for securing gauges, offering a combination that would require a more determined effort to remove it.

Examples of two independent physical controls to secure a gauge include storing it in a locked storage shed within a separate secured area inside a mini-warehouse or inside a fenced area with a locked gate or storing it in a locked van and securing it to the vehicle by steel cable.

There are approximately 5100 portable gauge licenses issued by either the NRC (1100 licenses) or the Agreement States (4000 licenses). Agreement States (32 States that have assumed, by mutual agreement, part of the NRC's regulatory authority) would adopt similar security requirements to be compatible with NRC regulations.

The deadline for providing comments on the proposed rulemaking is 75 days from the date of publication of a Federal Register Notice on this subject, expected shortly. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods: Mail to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff; E-mail to SECY@nrc.gov ; Fax to the Secretary at 301/415-1101; or Hand

deliver to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays. Electronic comments can also be filed through the NRC's interactive rulemaking website at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov> . For help in using the rulemaking website, contact Ms. Carol Gallagher at 301-415-5905; or by e-mail at cag@nrc.gov .

Documents related to this rulemaking, including comments received, will be available through the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management Systems (ADAMS). Help in using ADAMS is available by contacting the NRC Public Document Room staff at 301-415-4737 or 1-800-397-4209, or by sending a message to pdr@nrc.gov via e-mail. The documents are also available for inspection at the Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

For further information, contact Lydia Chang, Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T-9-C-24, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001; by telephone at 301-415-6319; or by e-mail at lwc1@nrc.gov.

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