

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

10 CFR Part 72

RIN 3150-

List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: Standardized NUHOMS®-24P, -52B, -61BT, -32PT, and -24PHB Revision

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Direct final rule.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is amending its regulations revising the Transnuclear, Inc., Standardized NUHOMS® Horizontal Modular Storage System (Standardized NUHOMS® System) listing within the “List of approved spent fuel storage casks” to include Amendment No. 6 in Certificate of Compliance (CoC) Number 1004. Amendment No. 6 will add the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to the Standardized NUHOMS® System. The NUHOMS®-24PHB cask will permit a Part 72 licensee to store high burnup Babcock & Wilcox 15x15 spent fuel assemblies with an average burnup of up to 55,000 megawatt-days/metric ton of uranium; enrichment equal to 4.5 weight percent uranium-235; maximum decay heat load of 1.3 kilowatt (kW) per assembly; and maximum heat load of 24 kW per cask, under a general license.

DATES: The final rule is effective (**insert date 75 days after publication in the Federal Register**), unless significant adverse comments are received by (**insert date 30 days after publication in the Federal Register**). A significant adverse comment is one which explains

why the rule would be inappropriate, including challenges to the rule's underlying premise or approach, or would be ineffective or unacceptable without a change. If the rule is withdrawn, timely notice will be published in the Federal Register.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any one of the following methods. Please include the following number (RIN 3150-XXXX) in the subject line of your comments.

Comments on rulemakings submitted in writing or in electronic form will be made available to the public in their entirety on the NRC rulemaking website. Personal information will not be removed from your comments.

Mail comments to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.

E-mail comments to: SECY@nrc.gov. If you do not receive a reply e-mail confirming that we have received your comments, contact us directly at (301) 415-1966. You may also submit comments via the NRC's rulemaking website at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov>. Address questions about our rulemaking website to Carol Gallagher (301) 415-5905; email cag@nrc.gov.

Hand deliver comments to: 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852, between 7:30 am and 4:15 pm Federal workdays [telephone (301) 415-1966].

Fax comments to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission at (301) 415-1101.

Publicly available documents related to this rulemaking may be examined and copied for a fee at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), Public File Area O-1F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. Selected documents, including comments, can be viewed and downloaded electronically via the NRC rulemaking website at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov>.

Publicly available documents created or received at the NRC after November 1, 1999, are available electronically at the NRC's Electronic Reading Room at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html>. From this site, the public can gain entry into the NRC's Agencywide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS), which provides text and image files of NRC's public documents. If you do not have access to ADAMS or if there are problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, contact the NRC PDR Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr@nrc.gov. An electronic copy of the proposed CoC and preliminary Safety Evaluation Report (SER) can be found under ADAMS Accession No. **insert accession number**.

CoC No. 1004, the revised Technical Specifications (TS), the underlying SER for Amendment No. 6, and the Environmental Assessment (EA) are available for inspection at the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD. Single copies of these documents may be obtained from Margaret Stambaugh, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-5449, email mxs8@nrc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Margaret Stambaugh, telephone (301) 415-5449, e-mail mxs8@nrc.gov, of the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 218(a) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended (NWPAA), requires that "[t]he Secretary [of the Department of Energy (DOE)] shall establish a demonstration program, in cooperation with the private sector, for the dry storage of spent nuclear fuel at civilian nuclear power reactor sites, with the objective of establishing one or more technologies that the [Nuclear Regulatory] Commission may, by rule, approve for use at the sites of civilian nuclear power reactors without, to the maximum extent practicable, the need for additional site-specific approvals by the Commission." Section 133 of the NWPAA states, in part, that "[t]he Commission shall, by rule, establish procedures for the licensing of any technology approved by the Commission under Section 218(a) for use at the site of any civilian nuclear power reactor."

To implement this mandate, the NRC approved dry storage of spent nuclear fuel in NRC-approved casks under a general license by publishing a final rule in 10 CFR Part 72 entitled, "General License for Storage of Spent Fuel at Power Reactor Sites" (55 FR 29181; July 18, 1990). This rule also established a new Subpart L within 10 CFR Part 72, entitled "Approval of Spent Fuel Storage Casks" containing procedures and criteria for obtaining NRC approval of spent fuel storage cask designs. The NRC subsequently issued a final rule on December 22, 1994 (59 FR 65920), that approved the Standardized NUHOMS® System (NUHOMS®-24P and -52B) cask designs and added them to the list of NRC-approved cask designs in § 72.214 as CoC No. 1004. Amendments 3 and 5, respectively, added the -61BT and -32PT designs to the Standardized NUHOMS® System.

Discussion

On August 31, 2001, and as supplemented June 13, 2002, November 18, 2002, and March 7, 2003, the certificate holder (Transnuclear, Inc.) submitted an application to the NRC to amend CoC No. 1004 to add the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to the Standardized NUHOMS® System. The amendment will permit a Part 72 licensee to use the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to store high burnup Babcock & Wilcox (B&W) 15x15 spent fuel assemblies with an average burnup of up to 55,000 megawatt-days (MWd)/metric ton of uranium (MTU); enrichment equal to 4.5 weight percent U-235; maximum decay heat load of 1.3 kilowatt (kW) per assembly; and maximum heat load of 24 kW per cask, under a general license. No other changes to the Standardized NUHOMS® System were requested in this application. The NRC staff performed a detailed safety evaluation of the proposed CoC amendment request and found that an acceptable safety margin is maintained. In addition, the NRC staff has determined that there is still reasonable assurance that public health and safety and the environment will be adequately protected.

This direct final rule revises the Standardized NUHOMS® System listing in § 72.214 by adding Amendment 6 to CoC No. 1004. The particular TS which are changed are identified in the NRC staff's SER for Amendment 6.

The amended Standardized NUHOMS® System, when used in accordance with the conditions specified in the CoC, the TS, and NRC regulations, will meet the requirements of Part 72; thus, adequate protection of public health and safety will continue to be ensured.

Discussion of Amendments by Section

§ 72.214 List of approved spent fuel storage casks.

Certificate No. 1004 is revised by adding the effective date of Amendment Number 6 and adding Model Number NUHOMS®-24PHB.

Procedural Background

This rule is limited to the changes contained in Amendment 6 to CoC No. 1004 and does not include other aspects of the Standardized NUHOMS® System. The NRC is using the “direct final rule procedure” to issue this amendment because it represents a limited and routine change to an existing CoC that is expected to be noncontroversial. Adequate protection of public health and safety continues to be ensured. The amendment to the rule will become effective on **(insert 75 days after publication in the Federal Register)**. However, if the NRC receives significant adverse comments by **(insert 30 days after publication in the Federal Register)**, then the NRC will publish a document that withdraws this action and will address the comments received in response to the proposed amendments published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. A significant adverse comment is a comment which explains why the rule would be inappropriate, including challenges to the rule’s underlying premise or approach, or would be ineffective or unacceptable without a change. A comment is adverse and significant if:

(1) The comment opposes the rule and provides a reason sufficient to require a substantive response in a notice-and-comment process. For example, in a substantive response:

(a) The comment causes the NRC staff to reevaluate (or reconsider) its position or conduct additional analysis;

(b) The comment raises an issue serious enough to warrant a substantive response to clarify or complete the record; or

(c) The comment raises a relevant issue that was not previously addressed or considered by the NRC staff.

(2) The comment proposes a change or an addition to the rule, and it is apparent that the rule would be ineffective or unacceptable without incorporation of the change or addition.

(3) The comment causes the NRC staff to make a change (other than editorial) to the CoC or TS.

These comments will be addressed in a subsequent final rule. The NRC will not initiate a second comment period on this action. However, if the NRC receives significant adverse comments by **(insert 30 days after publication in the Federal Register)**, then the NRC will publish a document that withdraws this action and will address the comments received in response to the proposed amendments published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Voluntary Consensus Standards

The National Technology Transfer Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-113) requires that Federal agencies use technical standards that are developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies unless the use of such a standard is inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical. In this direct final rule, the NRC would revise the Standardized NUHOMS® System listed in § 72.214 (List of NRC-approved spent fuel storage cask designs). This action does not constitute the establishment of a standard that establishes generally applicable requirements.

Agreement State Compatibility

Under the “Policy Statement on Adequacy and Compatibility of Agreement State Programs” approved by the Commission on June 30, 1997, and published in the Federal Register on September 3, 1997 (62 FR 46517), this rule is classified as Compatibility Category “NRC.” Compatibility is not required for Category “NRC” regulations. The NRC program elements in this category are those that relate directly to areas of regulation reserved to the NRC by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (AEA), or the provisions of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Although an Agreement State may not adopt program elements reserved to NRC, it may wish to inform its licensees of certain requirements via a mechanism that is consistent with the particular State’s administrative procedure laws, but does not confer regulatory authority on the State.

Plain Language

The Presidential Memorandum dated June 1, 1998, entitled “Plain Language in Government Writing,” directed that the Government’s writing be in plain language. The NRC requests comments on this direct final rule specifically with respect to the clarity and effectiveness of the language used. Comments should be sent to the address listed under the heading “ADDRESSES” above.

Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact: Availability

Under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the NRC regulations in Subpart A of 10 CFR Part 51, the NRC has determined that this rule, if adopted,

would not be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. The rule would amend the CoC for the Standardized NUHOMS® System within the list of approved spent fuel storage casks that power reactor licensees can use to store spent fuel at reactor sites under a general license by adding the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to the current cask system. The NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design will store high burnup B&W 15x15 spent fuel assemblies with an average burnup of up to 55,000 MWd/MTU; enrichment equal to 4.5 weight percent U-235; maximum decay heat load of 1.3 kW per assembly; and maximum heat load of 24 kW per cask. The EA and finding of no significant impact on which this determination is based are available for inspection at the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD. Single copies of the EA and finding of no significant impact are available from Margaret Stambaugh, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-5449, email mxs8@nrc.gov.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

This direct final rule does not contain a new or amended information collection requirement subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). Existing requirements were approved by the Office of Management and Budget, Approval Number 3150-0132.

Public Protection Notification

The NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a request for information or an information collection requirement unless the requesting document displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Regulatory Analysis

On July 18, 1990 (55 FR 29181), the NRC issued an amendment to 10 CFR Part 72 to provide for the storage of spent nuclear fuel under a general license in cask designs approved by the NRC. Any nuclear power reactor licensee can use NRC-approved cask designs to store spent nuclear fuel if it notifies the NRC in advance, spent fuel is stored under the conditions specified in the cask's CoC, and the conditions of the general license are met. A list of NRC-approved cask designs is contained in § 72.214. On December 22, 1994 (59 FR 65920), the NRC issued an amendment to Part 72 that approved the Standardized NUHOMS® System (NUHOMS®-24P and -52B) by adding it to the list of NRC-approved cask designs in § 72.214. Amendments 3 and 5, respectively, added the -61BT and -32PT cask designs to the Standardized NUHOMS® System. On August 31, 2001, and as supplemented June 13, 2002, November 18, 2002, and March 7, 2003, the certificate holder (Transnuclear, Inc.), submitted an application to the NRC to amend CoC No. 1004 to add the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to the Standardized NUHOMS® System. The proposed amendment permits a Part 72 licensee to use the NUHOMS®-24PHB cask design to store high burnup B&W 15x15 spent fuel assemblies with an average burnup of up to 55,000 MWd/MTU; enrichment equal to 4.5 weight

percent U-235; maximum decay heat load of 1.3 kW per assembly; and maximum heat load of 24 kW per cask, under a general license.

The alternative to this action is to withhold approval of this amended cask system design and issue an exemption to each general license. This alternative would cost both the NRC and the utilities more time and money because each utility would have to pursue an exemption.

Approval of the direct final rule will eliminate this problem and is consistent with previous NRC actions. Further, the direct final rule will have no adverse effect on public health and safety. This direct final rule has no significant identifiable impact or benefit on other Government agencies. Based on this discussion of the benefits and impacts of the alternatives, the NRC concludes that the requirements of the direct final rule are commensurate with the NRC's responsibilities for public health and safety and the common defense and security. No other available alternative is believed to be as satisfactory, and thus, this action is recommended.

Regulatory Flexibility Certification

In accordance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 [5 U.S.C. 605(b)], the NRC certifies that this rule will not, if issued, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This direct final rule affects only the licensing and operation of nuclear power plants, independent spent fuel storage facilities, and Transnuclear, Inc. The companies that own these plants do not fall within the scope of the definition of "small entities" set forth in the Regulatory Flexibility Act or the Small Business Size Standards set out in regulations issued by the Small Business Administration at 13 CFR Part 121.

Backfit Analysis

The NRC has determined that the backfit rule (10 CFR 50.109 or 10 CFR 72.62) does not apply to this direct final rule because this amendment does not involve any provisions that would impose backfits as defined. Therefore, a backfit analysis is not required.

Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act

In accordance with the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, the NRC has determined that this action is not a major rule and has verified this determination with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

List of Subjects In 10 CFR Part 72

Administrative practice and procedure, Criminal penalties, Manpower training programs, Nuclear materials, Occupational safety and health, Penalties, Radiation protection, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Spent fuel, Whistleblowing.

For the reasons set out in the preamble and under the authority of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended; the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended; and 5 U.S.C. 552 and 553; the NRC is adopting the following amendments to 10 CFR Part 72.

PART 72--LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INDEPENDENT STORAGE OF
SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL AND HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE

1. The authority citation for Part 72 continues to read as follows:

AUTHORITY: Secs. 51, 53, 57, 62, 63, 65, 69, 81, 161, 182, 183, 184, 186, 187, 189, 68 Stat. 929, 930, 932, 933, 934, 935, 948, 953, 954, 955, as amended, sec. 234, 83 Stat. 444, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2071, 2073, 2077, 2092, 2093, 2095, 2099, 2111, 2201, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2282); sec. 274, Pub. L. 86-373, 73 Stat. 688, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2021); sec. 201, as amended, 202, 206, 88 Stat. 1242, as amended, 1244, 1246 (42 U.S.C. 5841, 5842, 5846); Pub. L. 95-601, sec. 10, 92 Stat. 2951 as amended by Pub. L. 102-486, sec. 7902, 106 Stat. 3123 (42 U.S.C. 5851); sec. 102, Pub. L. 91-190, 83 Stat. 853 (42 U.S.C. 4332); secs. 131, 132, 133, 135, 137, 141, Pub. L. 97-425, 96 Stat. 2229, 2230, 2232, 2241, sec. 148, Pub. L. 100-203, 101 Stat. 1330-235 (42 U.S.C. 10151, 10152, 10153, 10155, 10157, 10161, 10168).

Section 72.44(g) also issued under secs. 142(b) and 148(c), (d), Pub. L. 100-203, 101 Stat. 1330-232, 1330-236 (42 U.S.C. 10162(b), 10168(c),(d)). Section 72.46 also issued under sec. 189, 68 Stat. 955 (42 U.S.C. 2239); sec. 134, Pub. L. 97-425, 96 Stat. 2230 (42 U.S.C. 10154). Section 72.96(d) also issued under sec. 145(g), Pub. L. 100-203, 101 Stat. 1330-235 (42 U.S.C. 10165(g)). Subpart J also issued under secs. 2(2), 2(15), 2(19), 117(a), 141(h), Pub. L. 97-425, 96 Stat. 2202, 2203, 2204, 2222, 2244 (42 U.S.C. 10101, 10137(a), 10161(h)). Subparts K and L are also issued under sec. 133, 98 Stat. 2230 (42 U.S.C. 10153) and sec. 218(a), 96 Stat. 2252 (42 U.S.C. 10198).

2. In § 72.214, Certificate of Compliance 1004 is revised to read as follows:

§ 72.214 List of approved spent fuel storage casks.

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Certificate Number: 1004

Initial Certificate Effective Date: January 23, 1995.

Amendment Number 1 Effective Date: April 27, 2000.

Amendment Number 2 Effective Date: September 5, 2000.

Amendment Number 3 Effective Date: September 12, 2001.

Amendment Number 4 Effective Date: February 12, 2002.

Amendment Number 5 Effective Date: **(insert effective date)**

Amendment Number 6 Effective Date: **(insert date 75 days after publication in the Federal Register)**

SAR Submitted by: Transnuclear, Inc.

SAR Title: Final Safety Analysis Report for the Standardized NUHOMS® Horizontal Modular Storage System for Irradiated Nuclear Fuel.

Docket Number: 72-1004

Certificate Expiration Date: January 23, 2015.

Model Number: Standardized NUHOMS®-24P, NUHOMS®-52B, NUHOMS®-61BT,
NUHOMS®-32PT, and NUHOMS®-24PHB.

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Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this _____ day of _____, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William D. Travers,
Executive Director for Operations.

Certificate Expiration Date: January 23, 2015.

Model Number: Standardized NUHOMS®-24P, NUHOMS®-52B, NUHOMS®-61BT,
NUHOMS®-32PT, and NUHOMS®-24PHB.

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Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this _____ day of _____, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William D. Travers,
Executive Director for Operations.

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