



NRC NEWS

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NRC AMENDS ITS REGULATIONS TO REQUIRE E-FILING IN ALL AGENCY HEARINGS

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulations to require electronic submissions in almost all agency hearings, consistent with the existing rules governing the high-level radioactive waste repository application proceeding. The rule will become effective Oct. 15, 2007, and will apply to new proceedings noticed on or after that date.

The Commission expects the new rule will allow NRC adjudicatory proceedings to be expedited and the costs reduced.

Under the new rule, documents in agency adjudications would need to be electronically submitted through the agency's Electronic Information Exchange to the E-Submittal system. Exceptions would be made to allow paper filings if parties can show "good cause" not to file electronically. For more information about the E-Submittal system or to file electronically, go to: <http://www.nrc.gov/site-help/e-submittals.html>.

The new rule builds on developments in the federal courts as well as previous NRC rules and creates a uniform system for electronic submissions. Since 2001, the NRC has encouraged power reactor licensees to submit documents either through an electronic information exchange system or on CD-Rom. In 2003, the NRC issued a final rule that allowed licensees, vendors, applicants and members of the public to submit documents, including Freedom of Information Act requests, in an electronic format. Almost all parties in adjudicatory proceedings currently file by electronic mail, but also must submit paper copies of their filings. This rule eliminates the paper copy requirement.

The final rule and related documents are available through the NRC's rulemaking Web page, at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov>.

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