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NRC Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Changes to Petition-for-Rulemaking Process

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a proposal to streamline and clarify its process for addressing petitions for rulemaking. Proposed changes to that process, to be published in the May 3 *Federal Register*, aim to improve transparency and make the process more efficient and effective.

The proposal marks the first comprehensive update to the NRC's process for considering rulemaking petitions since that process was established in 1979. The process allows any member of the public to petition the Commission to issue a new regulation or to amend or rescind an existing one. The NRC is proposing revisions designed to reduce the time the agency needs to complete action on a petition and allow resources to be allocated more efficiently.

The proposed rule incorporates much of the NRC's internal guidance to clarify the information that should be included in a petition. It also clarifies the process for resolving a rulemaking petition and for closing the petition docket, which would occur after the NRC denies a petition or initiates a rulemaking to address a petitioner's concerns.

Other changes include allowing petitioners to consult directly with NRC staff both before and after filing a petition; clarifying and expanding the criteria for determining whether a petition is complete and sufficient for docketing; and providing explicit criteria the NRC would use in considering a petition.

The NRC will accept public comment on the proposed rule for 75 days. Comments can be faxed to 301-415-1101 or mailed to Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Comments can also be submitted electronically by email to Rulemaking.Comments@nrc.gov or by going to the federal rulemaking [website](http://www.regulations.gov) and searching for Docket ID NRC-2009-0044.