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NRC Proposes Annual Fees for FY 2017

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on proposed changes to its regulations for the fees it will charge applicants and licensees for fiscal year 2017. The proposed changes would reduce annual fees for most licensees compared to FY 2016 due to reductions in the NRC's budget.

The fees in the proposed rule, published today in the *Federal Register*, would recover \$833.4 million, approximately 90 percent of the agency's budget, as required by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, as amended. About 39 percent – or \$324.6 million – of the fees would recover the cost of specific services to identifiable applicants and licensees under 10 CFR Part 170. The remaining 61 percent – or \$508.8 million – would be billed as annual fees under 10 CFR Part 171. The FY 2017 proposed fee rule is based on the FY 2017 Congressional Budget Justification, adjusted to reflect reductions from the NRC's recent re-baselining effort. The final rule will be based on the NRC's actual appropriation, and the agency will update the final fee schedule as appropriate. If the NRC receives a year-long continuing resolution, the final fee schedule may look similar to the FY 2016 final fee rule.

The proposed rule decreases annual fees by 7.3 percent over last year for operating reactors, by 16.1 percent for most fuel cycle facilities, and by 1.5 percent for spent fuel storage and decommissioning reactor licensees. Proposed fees increase on average by 8.8 percent for uranium recovery licensees, by 2.4 percent for research and test reactors, by 4.2 percent for Department of Energy transportation activities, and by 15 percent for DOE uranium recovery activities.

The proposed rule would increase the current hourly rate charged for NRC staff work by 0.8 percent, from \$265 in FY 2016 to \$267. Flat rate license application fees in 10 CFR 170.21 and 170.31 will adjust to reflect the new hourly rate. Small entity fees would also increase.

The *Federal Register* notice includes detailed instructions on how to submit written comments on the proposed fee rule. Comments will be accepted through March 1.