

NEWS BRIEFS

Utah Applies to NRC for Additional Waste Disposal Authority

The State of Utah has requested that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) amend the state's agreement status so that it may undertake additional regulatory authority over land disposal of radioactive materials in the state.

In accordance with Section 274 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, which provided a mechanism for the transfer of certain regulatory powers from federal to state jurisdiction, the state would assume regulatory control over the land disposal of radioactive source, by-product, and special nuclear materials not sufficient to form critical mass. If approved, Utah will become the 28th state in the nation to govern land disposal of such radioactive materials. (Currently, 29 states have an agreement state relationship with the NRC.) Presently, the state of Utah does not plan to assume authority over uranium and thorium mills and tailings.

According to the specifications of

the 1954 Act, the Commission must assess the agreement state's local radiation control programs to see if they are compatible with NRC standards and adequate to protect public health and safety. Following approval, the NRC would periodically review state protection standards, regulations, and statutes to assure compliance.

"We expect the NRC to amend the agreement in a few months," said Larry F. Anderson, MPA, director of the bureau of radiation control, Utah Department of Health, the body that will administer local regulations. "We have been building our radiation control program and it is a natural progression for us to regulate land disposal of radioactive wastes."

Mr. Anderson added that prior to the State of Utah's initial agreement with the NRC in 1984, the state's disposal regulation was handled out of an office in Arlington, Texas. "In those days, our sites were inspected only four weeks in a year, and some licenses were not even inspected at all. It is more efficient to regulate closer to home." ■

Nuclear Medicine Week Update

The fifth annual Nuclear Medicine Week (NMW) celebrations will be held July 29–August 4, 1990. Efforts have begun to make the week's activities more widely recognized and successful than ever. GE Medical Systems is again sponsoring the Media Stars contest, in which nuclear medicine departments compete on the basis of their NMW activities, such as media coverage, open houses, and slide and video shows. Posters, buttons, and stickers will be available for order beginning this month. For further information or to obtain a guidelines packet contact: Virginia Pappas, CAE, The Society of Nuclear Medicine, 136 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016-6760; (212) 889-0717; fax: (212) 545-0221. An article in the May 1990 *Newsline* will preview this year's NMW poster and button. ■

(continued from page 23A)

posal. (Copies of this guide, "Basic Quality Assurance Program for the Medical Use of Byproduct Material," document – DG-8001, can be obtained via written request to: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Division of Information Support Services, Washington, DC 20555.) Licensees can propose an alternative QA program that is based on another guidance, but under the proposed rule, according to Dr. Marcus, any program

"would have to include specific requirements that can lead to violations and enforcement actions." The NRC would review such proposed programs individually.

The NRC is accepting public comment on the proposed rule through April 12, 1990. SNM and ACNP are jointly preparing official comments to the proposed rule. Send comments to: Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attn: Docket-

ing and Service Branch. Any changes would be integrated into the final rule, which is expected to go to the Commissioners in March 1991. The rule will take effect six months after the final *Federal Register* announcement.

Sarah M. Tilyou

References

1. Basic quality assurance program, records and reports of misadministrations or events relating to the medical use of byproduct material. *Federal Register* 1990;55(10):1439.