



NRC NEWS

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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NRC TO MEET WITH USEC OFFICIALS AUGUST 14 TO DISCUSS PLANNED PORTSMOUTH PLANT CLOSURE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will meet with U.S. Enrichment Corporation officials August 14 in Piketon, Ohio, to discuss the planned shutdown of uranium enrichment activities at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant and the transfer of regulatory oversight from the NRC to the Department of Energy.

The meeting will be at 2:30 p.m. EDT at Ohio State University's Piketon Research and Extension Center, 1864 Shyville Road in Piketon. The meeting will be open to public observation. NRC staff members will be available after the meeting to answer questions.

U.S. Enrichment Corporation announced in June that production would continue at both the Portsmouth plant and the Paducah, Kentucky, Gaseous Diffusion Plant until June 2001. By that date, USEC anticipates it will close the Portsmouth enrichment operations after having upgraded the Paducah plant to produce customer-ready enriched uranium. Enriched uranium is used by most nuclear power plants to generate electricity. Currently, uranium enriched at Paducah needs to be further enriched at Portsmouth before it can be converted to usable fuel for nuclear power plants.

NRC staff, including the two resident inspectors at the plant, will continue to monitor plant activities until regulatory jurisdiction transfers back to the Department of Energy. USEC officials have said they anticipate the transfer would occur by June 2002. USEC would continue to operate the Portsmouth product transfer facility over the next four or five years until a similar facility would become available at Paducah.

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