



NRC NEWS

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Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

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NRC DEPLOYS NATIONAL SOURCE TRACKING SYSTEM; MILESTONE IN SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has deployed its National Source Tracking System (NSTS), a centralized national registry to provide cradle-to-grave accounting of certain high-risk radioactive materials used in industry, medicine and research.

The NSTS strengthens efforts by the NRC and other state and federal agencies to monitor the location, use and disposal of certain radiation sources that, if not properly controlled, may pose a safety and security risk to the public and the environment. The system also will improve the ability of regulators to detect and act upon inventory discrepancies, respond to emergencies, and verify legitimate import, export, ownership and use of sources.

The NSTS was mandated by Congress in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The NRC issued regulations implementing the system on Nov. 8, 2006, and licensees are required to begin using the system by Jan. 31. The NSTS harmonizes domestic requirements with internationally recognized guidance for the safety and security of radioactive material of concern, including the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA's) Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

“The NRC is dedicated to protecting the public's health and safety and the common defense by enhancing the security of these most sensitive radioactive materials,” NRC Chairman Dale E. Klein said. “The National Source Tracking System will enhance our ability to monitor transactions involving radioactive material and improve our knowledge of where they are being used.”

Radiation sources to be tracked by the system fall into Category 1 and Category 2 of the IAEA's ranking of radioactive materials. These include the individual sources used in irradiators, Gamma Knife[®] teletherapy devices, most radiography sources, some well logging sources, and others. Anyone possessing and using such sources is required to be a licensee of the NRC or one of its 35 Agreement States and will be responsible for reporting information to the NSTS. (Agreement States have assumed regulatory responsibility from the NRC over certain radioactive materials used in industry, medicine and research.)

The NSTS will contain information on who possesses tracked sources, including the name and address of a facility, the license number and contact information. Information on each source will include the make, model, serial number, radioactive material, and activity. The information will include records of transfers – shipment and receipt – between licensees, from the original sale by the manufacturer to eventual disposal.

Licensees will report to the NSTS primarily over the Internet using a secure, authenticated link. Licensees will have access to the information for their facility, but will not have access to information about other licensees. Members of the public will not have access to the data.

Licensees requiring help in obtaining credentials and accessing the NSTS may contact the NRC's National Source Tracking System Help Desk by e-mail at NSTS.HELP@nrc.gov or by phone toll-free at (877) 671-6787. More information about the NSTS is available on the NRC Web site at this address: <http://www.nrc.gov/security/byproduct/nsts.html>.

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