



NRC NEWS

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NRC PUBLISHES FINAL POLICY STATEMENT ON PROTECTION OF CESIUM CHLORIDE RADIATION SOURCES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued its final policy statement on the protection of sealed radiation sources containing cesium-137 chloride (CsCl).

Cesium chloride sources are used in blood irradiation, bio-medical and industrial research, and calibration of instrumentation and dosimetry. They have received special attention because the cesium chloride powder is highly soluble and dispersible, which could present security concerns if not properly secured.

The statement, published today in the *Federal Register*, describes the Commission's policy and expectations on the secure uses of cesium chloride sources and the agency's potential actions should the threat environment change. The policy statement emphasizes that the security of radiation sources is an essential part of the NRC's mission, cesium chloride sources are adequately protected under current NRC requirements, and the NRC encourages voluntary design improvements that could further enhance their security.

While noting the beneficial uses of cesium chloride sources, the policy statement encourages development of alternative forms of cesium-137. It also expresses the NRC's view that it is "imperative to develop a pathway for the long-term storage and disposal of these sources whether or not alternative forms are developed."

The policy statement discusses security improvements that have been imposed by the NRC and state agencies following the terrorist events of Sept. 11, 2001, as well as voluntary programs initiated by other government agencies to enhance security beyond NRC requirements.

The NRC published a draft policy statement in the *Federal Register* on June 29, 2010, and held a public workshop to receive public comments Nov. 8-9. The final policy statement reflects the public comments received on the draft policy statement.

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