



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. 11-182

September 28, 2011

NRC APPROVES USEC'S PLAN TO RETURN PORTSMOUTH GASEOUS DIFFUSION ENRICHMENT PLANT TO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved the United States Enrichment Corp. (USEC)'s plan to return the remainder of the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (GDP) to the regulatory control of the Department of Energy (DOE) and to terminate the NRC's Certificate of Compliance for the plant.

USEC requested termination of its certification in letters to the NRC dated March 15 and June 28. As part of the termination process, USEC will terminate its lease with DOE for the remaining facilities at the plant still under USEC control.

The Portsmouth plant, located near Piketon, Ohio, was a DOE-owned uranium enrichment plant that was transferred to USEC when that company was created and later privatized in the 1990s. USEC terminated enrichment operations in 2001 and has maintained the plant in cold standby since. In September 2010, USEC transferred the main process buildings back to DOE control. As part of the current certificate termination, USEC will transfer the remainder of the facility, including NRC-regulated material, to DOE, which will regulate the plant under 10 CFR 830. At that point, NRC regulation under 10 CFR 76 will no longer be necessary.

DOE has agreed to assume regulatory authority over the plant and take possession and ownership of USEC-generated nuclear material at the site. Before the Certificate of Compliance can be terminated, USEC must certify to the NRC that all material has been transferred to DOE's possession and ensure proper accounting of all material in the Nuclear Material Management and Safeguards System. Upon receiving and verifying USEC's certification of the transfer, the NRC will issue a letter terminating the Certificate of Compliance.

USEC's Lead Cascade and American Centrifuge Plant, under construction, are unaffected by the termination of the GDP certificate. They remain under NRC license and regulation under 10 CFR 70.

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