located at 2120 L Street NW. (Lower Level), Washington, DC 20012–7082, telephone: (202) 512–2249.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis Allison, Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, telephone (301) 415–6835, e-mail dpa@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

On February 12, 1996 (61 FR 5318), the NRC published in the **Federal Register** proposed amendments to 10 CFR Part 50 that would have required operating reactor licensees to report reliability and availability information for certain risk-significant systems and equipment. The reporting requirements would have applied to the event-mitigating systems and equipment that have or could have a significant effect on risk in terms of avoiding core damage accidents or preserving containment integrity. The data that would have been reported would have included: the number of demands and the number of failures to start associated with those demands, along with additional descriptive information; the number of hours of operation following each successful start including whether or not the run was terminated by equipment failure, along with additional descriptive information; the number of hours equipment is unavailable, along with additional descriptive information; for each period equipment is unavailable due to component failure, descriptive information on that failure; and the number of hours when two or more trains from the same or different systems were concurrently unavailable, along with additional descriptive information.

The public comment period closed on June 11, 1996. The NRC received 31 comment letters. One comment letter supported the rule, stating that the public and industry could expect significant benefits. Most of the remaining comments opposed the rule, stating that the proposed reporting requirements costs were underestimated, benefits were overestimated, the rule would be overly burdensome, the rule would be premature, and that the rule is not justified.

The Commission SRM dated June 28, 1995, issued in response to SECY–95–129, and the SRM on SECY–95–215 dated October 24, 1995, directed the NRC staff to continue to work with industry on voluntary submittal of reliability data under a program that will meet the needs of all parties. On October 1, 1996, the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) provided the NRC with a sample of data available from its Safety System Performance Indicator (SSPI) system, as part of a voluntary nuclear industry data sharing initiative. A revised Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between INPO and the NRC was signed on December 24, 1996, providing NRC with access to SSPI data. In addition, on March 21, 1997, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) provided the NRC with a description of a new INPO data collection system, Equipment Performance and Information Exchange (EPIX). Based upon a review of data available in SSPI and EPIX, as well as the information available from Licensee Event Reports and Monthly Operating Reports, the Commission has determined that under the voluntary approach, the NRC can estimate risk parameters and construct a reliability database that reflects the parameters needed for effective use in risk-informed applications. Thus, the intended benefits of the proposed rule would be realized and the main advantages of the voluntary approach (i.e., the lower cost, schedule, and industry support) outweigh any disadvantages. The NRC will continue to work with industry representatives to improve thecontent of the voluntary data. Because of industry's voluntary alternative approach to the rule, the Commission is withdrawing this proposed rulemaking.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of November, 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John C. Hoyle,

Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 98–32106 Filed 12–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

10 CFR Part 60

RIN 3150–AC03

Elimination of Inconsistencies Between NRC Regulations and EPA High-Level Waste Standards

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Proposed rule: Withdrawal.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is withdrawing a notice of proposed rulemaking that would have eliminated several inconsistencies with the generic Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards to be developed for the disposal of High-Level Waste (HLW) in deep geologic repositories. Because the NRC is developing site-specific disposal regulations for Yucca Mountain, Nevada, consistent with the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EnPA), the proposed rule is being withdrawn.

ADDRESSES: The Commission paper, the staff requirement memoranda (SRM), and associated documents are available for public inspection, and copying for a fee, at the NRC Public Document Room located at 2120 L Street NW. (Lower Level), Washington, DC 20012–7082, telephone: (202) 512–2249.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim McCartin, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, telephone (301) 415–6681, e-mail tjm3@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

On June 19, 1986 (51 FR 22288), the NRC published a notice of proposed rulemaking in the **Federal Register** that would have eliminated several inconsistencies with the EPA standards to be developed for the disposal of HLW in deep geologic repositories. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA) directs NRC to issue criteria for the licensing of HLW geologic repositories. Section 121(c) of this Act states that the criteria for the licensing of HLW geologic repositories must be consistent with these standards. The proposed rule was necessary to eliminate several inconsistencies with the EPA standards, thus fulfilling the statutory requirement. However, since then, Congress passed the EnPA, which requires EPA to issue radiation standards for the proposed geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, based on and consistent with the findings and recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Under EnPA, NRC is also required to develop site-specific disposal regulations that would apply solely to the proposed geologic repository at Yucca Mountain. NAS published its findings and recommendations in 1995.

The NRC staff has considered and is implementing a strategy for developing site-specific disposal regulations that would apply solely to the proposed geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, and is deferring the updating of 10 CFR Part 60 generic requirements to a later date. These site-specific regulations will be issued consistent with EnPA, which also requires the Environmental Protection Agency to issue radiation standards for a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, based on and consistent with the 1995 findings and recommendations of the NAS.

The NRC staff's strategy for developing the site-specific disposal

regulations for Yucca Mountain can be found in a Commission paper, designated SECY–97–300, dated December 24, 1997. This strategy was approved by the SRM dated March 6, 1998. Because the NRC is developing site-specific disposal regulations for Yucca Mountain, Nevada, the proposed rulemaking is being withdrawn.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of November, 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John C. Hoyle,

Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 98–32109 Filed 12–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

10 CFR Part 430

[Docket Number EE–RM–97–500]

RIN:1904–AA75

Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products: Fluorescent Lamp Ballasts Energy Conservation Standards

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: On October 30, 1998, the Department of Energy published a notice providing limited reopening of the record of its rulemaking to revise energy conservation standards for fluorescent lamp ballasts under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (63 FR 58330). The notice announced that November 30, 1998, would be the closing date for receiving public comments regarding the Department's consideration of consumers who choose electronic ballast T–8 systems over electronic ballast T–12 systems and consumers who choose electronic ballasts over cathode cutout ballasts. On November 20, 1998, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association requested that the comment period be extended until December 15, 1998, to allow additional time for data collection and to avoid having the closing date immediately follow the Thanksgiving holiday. The Department agrees to extend the comment period closing date until December 15, 1998.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before December 15, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments are welcome. Please submit 10 copies (no faxes) to: Brenda Edwards-Jones, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products: Fluorescent Lamp Ballasts, Docket No. EE–RM–97–500, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585–0121.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carl Adams, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, EE–43, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585–0121, (202) 586–9127, or Eugene Margolis, Esq., U.S. Department of Energy, Office of General Counsel, GC–72, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586–9507.

Issued in Washington, DC, on November 25, 1998.

Dan W. Reicher,

Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

[FR Doc. 98–32120 Filed 12–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

12 CFR Part 229

[Regulation CC; Docket No. R–1027]

Availability of Funds and Collection of Checks

AGENCY: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the Board) is proposing to amend Regulation CC to allow banks that consummate a merger on or after July 1, 1998, and before June 1, 1999, greater time to implement software changes related to the merger.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 4, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments, which should refer to Docket No. R–1027, may be mailed to Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Secretary, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 20th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20551. Comments addressed to Ms. Johnson may also be delivered to the Board's mail room between 8:45 a.m. and 5:15 p.m., and to the security control room at all other times. Both the mail room and the security control room are accessible from the courtyard entrance on 20th Street between Constitution Avenue and C Street, N.W. Comments may be inspected in room MP–500, pursuant to § 261.12 of the Board's Rules Regarding Availability of Information, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., except as provided in § 261.14 of those same Rules. (12 CFR 261.12 and 261.14)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jean Anderson, Staff Attorney, Legal Division (202/452–3707). For the hearing impaired only, Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), Diane Jenkins (202/452–3544).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Board is proposing to amend Regulation CC to allow banks that consummate merger transactions on or after July 1, 1998, and before June 1, 1999, greater time to implement software changes related to the merger. The Board recognizes that banks are currently dedicating their automation resources to renovating and testing software and replacing noncompliant systems to address Year 2000 and leap year computer problems. Because a large amount of banks' automation resources may be dedicated to these efforts, banks may be challenged to make and test other programming changes, including those that may be required to comply with Regulation CC's merger transition provisions, thus potentially jeopardizing the success of their Year 2000 efforts and/or their system integration efforts due to the merger. Therefore, the Board is proposing to allow banks that consummate a merger on or after July 1, 1998, and before June 1, 1999, to be treated as separate banks until June 1, 2000. Beginning in June 1999, the normal one-year transition period will resume.

The Board requests comment on the need for this amendment and whether the proposed liberalization of the regulation's merger transition provisions is adequate to avoid contention for programming and testing resources necessary to manage banks' Year 2000 readiness efforts that otherwise would be created by these requirements.

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601–612) requires an agency to publish an initial regulatory flexibility analysis with any notice of proposed rulemaking. The initial regulatory flexibility analysis (5 U.S.C. 603(b)) requires an agency to describe the reasons why the proposed rule is being considered and a statement of the objectives of, and legal basis for, the proposed rule. The ''Supplementary Information'' above, contains this information. The proposed rule requires no additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements and does not overlap with other federal rules.

The initial regulatory flexibility analysis also requires a description of,