

Long-term Management of NORM Residues

Zhiwen Fan, John Rowat

International Atomic Energy Agency, PO Box 100, 1400 Vienna, Austria

Tel: +43(1) 2600 22509; Email: z.fan@iaea.org

Abstract

To respond to growing requests and concerns with the safety of NORM residues, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is developing a safety guide that incorporates up-to-date international safety standards and good practices. NORM residues have very diversified origin and characteristics. Most contains very low level but long-lived radionuclides, which requires long term consideration when management options are evaluated and planned. Management of NORM residues starts with identification and characterization of the residues concerned, then determining which options can be deployed to achieve the long term objective of safety. Long-term management of NORM residues depends on physical and radioactive features of the residues, but also draws upon existing infrastructures dealing with both conventional waste and radioactive waste. Selection of long-term management options for NORM residues should be considered as an integrated part of the national policy and strategy for waste management. Management of residues from uranium production has been practices for decades, experiences which have been learned will be applicable to the situations dealing with NORM residues from other origins. NORM residues, when there is no foreseeable use, can be disposed of in specialist disposal facility, landfill for conventional disposal, and/or disposal facilities for radioactive waste. Safety assessment should serve as a useful tool in determination of the management options. This presentation will focus on the IAEA safety standards for NORM residues.
