

Lennett also objects because the rules do not require companies to have on hand the financial resources necessary to clean up a site in case of contamination or leaching. He contends that without this assurance, the federal government may be held liable for cleanup expenses should contamination occur.

EPA estimates that the regulations may cost industry as little as \$150 million or as much as \$1.1 billion, depending on the number of firms that need to modify their facilities and on whether companies choose the cheapest or the most expensive methods to conform with regulations covering landfill sites and ground water cleanup. A spokesman for the National Solid Waste Management Association says the rules are technically feasible but that the cost of implementation may drive some small companies out of business. Large firms will be unaffected, he says.

The new rules, which go into effect in 6 months, were developed as a result of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. For various reasons, the agency has been slow to issue them (*Science*, 16 April, pp. 275-276). Although the rules are a significant accomplishment, the agency has yet to address the more general question of whether hazardous waste is more appropriately disposed of in landfills or by alternative methods such as incineration.

—Marjorie Sun

NRC Puts Limit on Mental Stress Tests

When the Court of Appeals ruled last May that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) must take mental stress around Three Mile Island (TMI) into account in deciding whether to permit restart of TMI's undamaged reactor, it caused some mental anguish in the nuclear industry and the agency. The ruling was widely held to mean that mental stress must be considered in all NRC licensing processes, (*Science*, 11 June, p. 1203).

The NRC has now relieved some of the anxiety, however. On 15 July, NRC announced that it interprets the court ruling to apply only to TMI, not to power plant licensing in general. This

narrow interpretation would significantly weaken its impact. In addition, NRC has asked the Solicitor General to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court. The owner of TMI has already filed an appeal.

It is not even clear what NRC will do in the TMI case. The appeals court ordered NRC to determine whether significant new data are available on the mental impact of restarting TMI's No. 1 reactor and then to decide whether a new environmental impact statement should be written. But on 15 July, the commission told TMI's operator, General Public Utilities, that it does not yet have enough information to make such a decision. The company had petitioned for a rapid ruling.

The commissioners voted 4 to 1 to reject the utility's request. Victor Gilsinsky, the sole dissenter, charged that NRC "seems to be more interested in keeping alive controversy in order to justify Supreme Court review" at the cost of deferring a decision to restart the reactor at TMI.

—Marjorie Sun

Heart Institute Gets New Director

A veteran of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Claude Lenfant, has been appointed director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The heart institute, with a budget of \$550 million last year, is the second largest of the 11 institutes. (The National Cancer Institute has the biggest budget, just shy of \$1 billion.)

Lenfant, 53, has been head of NIH's Fogarty International Center since 1981. The center handles much of NIH's international biomedical affairs. In 1970, he became the first associate director of lung diseases at the heart institute. Lenfant is a graduate of the University of Paris and was formerly a faculty member at the University of Washington at Seattle. He is the third director to be selected recently from within NIH ranks by top director James B. Wyngaarden.

His appointment leaves three directorships vacant at the institutes for aging, dental research, and neurological and communicative disorders.

—Marjorie Sun

Debate Stirred by New Love Canal Report

A new chapter has opened in the continuing controversy over hazards associated with a chemical waste dump in the Love Canal area of New York. A report, issued on 14 July by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), concludes that chemicals from the dump have migrated only as far as the homesites immediately adjacent to it, and that further contamination is unlikely. Consequently, the Department of Health and Human Services, after reviewing the EPA study, has concluded that most of the homes in the surrounding community are safe for habitation.

The report appears to repudiate the government's position in 1980, when nearly 600 families were evacuated from the neighborhood at a cost of \$20 million in public funds. It is based on extensive analysis of more than 6000 samples from the area taken late in 1980, after the evacuation. Although it is expected to clear the way for the resale of most of the homes by the state, the report has attracted some criticism from Love Canal residents and the New York congressional delegation.

Senator Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.), for example, issued a statement calling it "messy and inconclusive." His interpretation differed sharply with that of a panel of federal scientists that reviewed the results and said explicitly that the area in question "is as habitable as the control areas with which it was compared." But residents and some scientists who acted as consultants to the government say that the study methodology might have been flawed, and that the HHS conclusion is too liberal. These disputes may be sorted out this week or next during hearings of the House subcommittee on commerce, science, and transportation, under the chairmanship of Representative James Florio (D-N.J.).

Two days before the EPA results were released, the New York state attorney general released a more limited study that uncovered high levels of dioxin, a highly toxic chemical, in homes adjacent to the dump. EPA says the state report is consistent with its conclusions.—R. Jeffrey Smith