

Mr. Sander
AEC

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Tel. Hazelwood 7-7831
Ext. 3446

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AEC TO REVISE CHARGES FOR ENRICHED AND
DEPLETED URANIUM

The Atomic Energy Commission on July 1, 1961, will reduce its base charges for enriched and depleted uranium and will increase its use-charge rate, Chairman Glenn T. Seaborg announced today. The changes will apply to material leased or sold in the future under domestic and foreign arrangements and also to material now under lease where appropriate.

Chairman Seaborg said the net effect would be to lower the cost of nuclear power--the reduction varying from one reactor to another. It would also bring into better balance AEC's charges for enriched uranium as compared with current market prices of natural uranium. These changes would reduce distortion of technology and economics with regard to the use of enriched versus natural uranium in power reactors.

The base charges are a schedule of values the AEC places on enriched and depleted uranium, varying with the percentage of uranium-235 present. (Enriched uranium contains a higher percentage of the isotope U-235 and depleted uranium contains a lower percentage of U-235 than the 0.71 per cent found in natural uranium.) When the AEC sells enriched uranium to foreign governments, generally for fueling power reactors, the selling price is the same as the base charge. Domestically, the AEC does not sell enriched uranium but leases it, assessing an annual use charge as a percentage of the base charge. The schedule of base charges is also used by the AEC to assess lessees for the amount of uranium

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