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NRC Seeks Comment on Supplement to Certification Rule for General Electric-Hitachi New Reactor Design

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a supplement to the proposed rule to certify General Electric-Hitachi's (GEH) Economic Simplified Boiling Water Reactor (ESBWR) design. The supplement would add to the agency's March 2011 proposed rule.

The supplement covers changes to analysis of the design's steam dryer, which prevents excess moisture from damaging a nuclear power plant's electricity-generating turbine. Since early 2012, NRC reviewers have been requesting and then examining additional steam dryer information from GEH. The supplement also formally incorporates several dozen reference documents as requirements in the draft certification rule.

The design certification process includes public participation as the NRC resolves any safety issues for proposed reactor designs. NRC certification, in the form of a final rule, means the design meets the agency's safety requirements. An applicant for a nuclear power plant license using a certified design doesn't need to submit safety information for the certified design. Instead, the license application and the NRC's safety review would address the remaining safety issues for the proposed nuclear power plant.

The proposed rule supplement is available on regulations.gov under Docket ID NRC-2010-0135. Comments on the topics covered by the supplement may be submitted until June 5 through regulations.gov; by e-mail to Rulemaking.Comments@nrc.gov; by mail to Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff; or by fax to Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, at 301-415-1101.

More information about the ESBWR design review can be found on the NRC's [website](http://www.nrc.gov). The NRC is currently reviewing two Combined License applications referencing the GEH design. Detroit Edison Company is seeking a license for [Fermi Unit 3](#) in Monroe County, Michigan, and Dominion is seeking a license for [North Anna Unit 3](#) in Louisa County, Virginia. The NRC has certified four other standard reactor designs: the Advanced Boiling Water Reactor, System 80+, AP600, and AP1000.