



NRC NEWS

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NRC Approves Proposed Disposal Plan at Church Rock Site in New Mexico

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved a plan by United Nuclear Corp. to dispose of mine waste from the Northeast Church Rock mine site in New Mexico at the company's nearby existing uranium mill tailings site.

In a license amendment issued Feb. 15, the NRC authorized the company's plan to dispose of approximately 1 million cubic yards of waste from the mine at the tailings site in McKinley County, New Mexico, northeast of Gallup. The proposal is part of a longstanding U.S. Environmental Protection Agency effort to clean up the Northeast Church Rock mine site, which was contaminated during mining operations from 1967 to 1982. The project includes improvements to the existing tailings impoundment and nearby infrastructure.

The NRC's consideration of the license amendment request included an environmental review and a safety review. A final [Environmental Impact Statement](#), published in January, assessed the potential impacts of excavating the waste and transferring it to the mill site for disposal. The safety review covered the disposal aspect of the plan, as the mill tailings facility is licensed by the NRC. The NRC's regulatory jurisdiction does not extend to the mine itself. The staff's final [Safety Evaluation Report](#) was issued in December.

More information on the Church Rock site is available on the [NRC website](#).