



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Region II

Atlanta, GA. 30303-1257
www.nrc.gov



No: II-23-028
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September 23, 2023

NRC Approves Further Uranium Enrichment at American Centrifuge Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has authorized American Centrifuge Operating LLC to proceed with its planned demonstration project to produce high-assay low-enriched uranium, known as HALEU, under its contract with the Department of Energy. This is a major step in developing advanced fuels for the next generation of nuclear reactors.

The authorization signed Sept. 21 allows the company to possess and use enough uranium to perform Phase 1 of the company's contract with DOE, the production of 20 kilograms of HALEU. The company plans to enrich the uranium in its HALEU Demonstration Cascade module at the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon, Ohio. HALEU is enriched up to 20 percent in the isotope U-235, higher than the typical 3-5 percent found in current nuclear reactor fuel.

"This authorization follows a rigorous review of the American Centrifuge Plant's safety features and operating procedures," said NRC Region II Administrator Laura A. Dudes. "The NRC is committed to ensuring that all nuclear facilities operate safely and securely, and we will continue to closely monitor the HALEU Demonstration Cascade to ensure that it continues to meet our high safety standards."

The NRC in June authorized the company to possess a smaller amount of material as part of its project preparations. The company plans to initiate HALEU production in October and complete Phase 1 in December.

The amount of material and higher enrichment level authorized make the American Centrifuge Plant the first [Category II fuel facility](#) licensed by the NRC.

Details of the [inspections](#) and the latest [authorization letter](#) are available on the NRC website.