



NRC NEWS

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NRC to Issue Final Rule for Emergency Preparedness For Small Modular Reactors and Other New Technologies

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has directed the staff to issue a final rule and associated regulatory guide that applies risk-informed, performance-based emergency preparedness requirements to small modular reactors and other new technologies. These technologies include non-light-water reactors, research and test reactors and medical radioisotope facilities.

The rule, to be published in the Federal Register later this year, builds on the NRC's existing emergency preparedness program for large, light-water cooled nuclear power reactors. The rule and related guidance, when published, will address how state-of-the-art facility designs and safety research apply to future operation of small modular reactors and other new technologies.

The rule's emergency preparedness framework adopts a technology-inclusive and consequence-oriented approach. The requirements include a scalable method to determine the size of the offsite emergency planning zone around a facility. Applicants and licensees for SMRs and other new technologies can use the rule in developing a performance-based emergency preparedness program as an alternative to the current offsite radiological emergency planning requirements.

This rule excludes: large light-water reactors (those licensed to produce greater than 1,000 megawatts thermal power); fuel cycle facilities; and currently operating research and test reactors. These classes of facilities remain under the current requirements.