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# NRC NEWS

## U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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### **NRC ALLOWS REACTOR LICENSEES TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTS ELECTRONICALLY**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is allowing its reactor licensees to voluntarily submit documents to the agency electronically or in CD format if certain procedures and requirements are followed. Previously, the staff has granted specific exceptions, on a case-by-case basis, to the requirement that only paper copies of documents be submitted.

Since June of last year, the NRC has been testing a pilot program with several licensees that allows them to submit electronic documents in a secure manner. Digital certificates, which are data structures that contain unique identifiers, and digital signatures, which enable users to electronically sign documents, are assigned to the sender and assure that documents are authentic and certified.

The staff is now expanding the program, and the voluntary arrangement is described in a "regulatory issues summary" sent to all reactor licensees.

The NRC intends to issue a rule this year which would allow all licensees, applicants, and members of the public to submit documents electronically or in CD format. The rule would also address other submittal methods such as diskette, digital video disks, and e-mails.

This current initiative does not apply to documents that are submitted by operating reactor licensees to support the reactor oversight process, for which the NRC will provide separate guidance. It also does not include adjudicatory documents such as those submitted to the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board or the Commission. Those must continue to be filed on paper.

More guidance on the electronic submittal program and instructions on how to obtain a digital certificate, are located on the NRC's web page, at [www.nrc.gov/NRC/EIE/index.html](http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/EIE/index.html)

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