



NRC NEWS

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NRC ACCEPTS US-APWR DESIGN APPLICATION FOR REVIEW

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has accepted for review an application from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to certify the U.S. Advanced Pressurized Water Reactor (US-APWR) design. The docket number assigned to this application is 52-021.

“We’re expecting an application later this year from a company that wants permission to build and operate a US-APWR in Texas,” said Bill Borchardt, Director of the NRC’s Office of New Reactors. “The staff expects this design certification review will continue at least into 2011.”

The US-APWR design, a similar version of which is currently under license review in Japan, is a nuclear power plant capable of producing about 1,700 megawatts of electricity. Mitsubishi submitted the application and associated information Dec. 31, 2007. The application, minus proprietary or security-related details, is available on the NRC Web site here: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/design-cert/apwr.html> . Docketing this application does not indicate whether the Commission will approve or reject the request.

If the NRC certifies the US-APWR, a company applying for a license to build and operate a new nuclear power plant in the United States could choose to use the design and reference it in the application. Safety issues resolved within the scope of the design certification are not subject to litigation with respect to that individual license application, although site-specific design information and environmental impacts associated with building and operating the plant at a particular location could be litigated. NRC has certified four other standard reactor designs.

The staff’s technical review will include requests for additional information, as needed, and the staff will issue a Safety Evaluation Report after all technical and safety questions have been resolved. The NRC would then certify the design through an agency rulemaking, which includes an opportunity for public participation.

The agency is currently reviewing General Electric's Economic Simplified Boiling Water Reactor and Areva's Evolutionary Power Reactor. Information about the design certification process is available on the NRC Web site here: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/design-cert.html> . The NRC's regulations describe the certification process in Subpart B of Part 52, available on the agency's Web site here: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/cfr/part052/> .

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