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NRC Concludes Hearing On Fermi New Reactor, Combined License To Be Issued

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has concluded its mandatory hearing on DTE Electric Company's (DTE) application for a Combined License (COL) at the Fermi site in Michigan. The Commission found the staff's review adequate to make the necessary regulatory safety and environmental findings, clearing the way for the NRC's Office of New Reactors to issue the license.

The NRC staff will work to issue the COL promptly. The license will authorize DTE to build and operate an [Economic Simplified Boiling -Water Reactor](#) (ESBWR) at the Fermi site, adjacent to the company's existing reactor near Newport, Mich. The Commission imposed several conditions on the license, including:

- specific actions associated with the agency's post-Fukushima requirements for [Mitigation Strategies](#) and [Spent Fuel Pool Instrumentation](#);
- requiring monitoring and analysis of the reactor's steam dryer during initial plant startup, in line with current procedures for existing boiling-water reactors approved to operate at increased power levels; and
- setting a pre-startup schedule for post-Fukushima aspects of the new reactor's emergency preparedness plans and procedures.

DTE submitted its COL application on Sept. 18, 2008. The NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards independently reviewed aspects of the application that concern safety, as well as the staff's [final safety evaluation report](#) (FSER). The committee provided the [results](#) of its review to the Commission on Sept. 22, 2014. The NRC completed its environmental review and issued the final impact statement for the proposed Fermi reactor in January 2013. The NRC completed and issued the FSER on Nov. 18, 2014.

The NRC completed the COL review after the agency certified the ESBWR design following a [Commission vote](#) in September 2014. The ESBWR is a 1,600-megawatt electric reactor that includes passive safety features to cool down the reactor after an accident without the need for electricity or human intervention.