



# BACKGROUND

Office of Public Affairs

301.415.8200

[www.nrc.gov](http://www.nrc.gov) ■ [opa.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:opa.resource@nrc.gov)



## Drones and Nuclear Power Plant Security

The increasing availability and popularity of commercial uncrewed aerial systems, or drones, have resulted in numerous reports of sightings over critical infrastructure facilities, to include nuclear power plants. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission updated its regulations in 2024 to require nuclear power plant licensees to report sightings of drones over their facilities. [These reports](#) are sent to the NRC, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and local law enforcement. Additionally, in late 2019, the nuclear industry began coordinating with the Department of Energy and the FAA to restrict drone overflights over certain nuclear power plants.

While nuclear power plant security forces do not have the authority to interdict or shoot down aircraft, including drones, flying over their facilities, commercial nuclear power plants are inherently secure and robust, hardened structures. They are built to withstand hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes. Nuclear plants maintain high levels of security measures, which ensure they can defend against threats up to and including the applicable [design basis threats](#). These licensees are required to maintain well-trained and armed security forces, physical barriers, and intrusion detection and surveillance systems to defend against threats.

The NRC staff monitors and continuously analyzes terrorist and criminal tactics, techniques, and procedures that occur domestically and worldwide to assess and ensure the continued adequacy of the NRC's design basis threats. Staff also conducts liaison activities with the Intelligence Community, law enforcement, and other federal agencies in support of its intelligence and threat mission. The NRC staff monitors and inspects nuclear power plants to ensure NRC regulated facilities provide reasonable assurance of public health and safety and the common defense and security.

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