

## The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Mission

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) was established by Congress in 1974 as an independent regulatory agency. The NRC licenses and regulates the Nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to protect public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment.

## The NRC's regulatory mission covers three main areas:

**Reactors**—Commercial reactors for generating electric power and research and test reactors used for research, testing, and training.

**Materials**—Uses of nuclear materials in medical, industrial, and academic settings and facilities that produce nuclear fuel.

**Waste**—Transportation, storage, and disposal of nuclear materials and waste and decommissioning of nuclear facilities.

## NRC Locations:

NRC Headquarters is located in Rockville, MD, and NRC regional offices are in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and Arlington, TX.

## For Additional NRC Information, See:

### The agency's public Web site:

<https://www.nrc.gov>

### State and Tribal Programs page:

<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/state-tribal.html>

<https://scp.nrc.gov/>

### Emergency Preparedness and Response page:

<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/emerg-preparedness.html>

### NRC Tribal page:

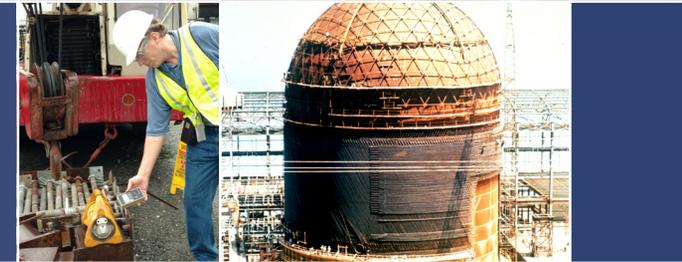
<https://tribal.nrc.gov/>

### State Communication Portal:

<https://scp.nrc.gov>



## STATE PROGRAMS AT THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



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## The NRC's Interactions with States

The NRC is committed to working in collaboration with States. Through many State-focused policies and programs, the NRC strives to do the following:

- Keep States informed on topics of mutual interest.
- Give States opportunities to participate in the NRC's regulatory processes.
- Assist State activities when appropriate.
- Maintain oversight when States assume regulatory authority from the NRC for specific radioactive materials and activities.

The NRC has dedicated staff members in its various offices who routinely interact with their State counterparts through meetings, conferences, and outreach activities. These activities include developing State-specific communications and participating in State organizations and national groups. Through these interactions, the NRC staff keeps the agency and the States informed of relevant activities, views, and interests to support ongoing cooperation.

## Coordination on Emergency Preparedness and Incident Response

The NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) cooperate on radiological emergency planning and preparedness at NRC-licensed facilities. A joint memorandum of understanding outlines the responsibilities of each agency. FEMA has the lead responsibility for assessing State, local, and Tribal (offsite) emergency planning. FEMA reports the results of its assessments to the NRC, and the NRC factors these results into its decisionmaking.

The NRC's Incident Response Program regularly coordinates with States by participating in licensee emergency preparedness exercises and by periodically inviting senior State officials to observe the NRC emergency exercises at its Headquarters Operations Center. In the unlikely event of an actual incident, the NRC would frequently communicate with the State and support the actions of State, local, and Tribal authorities.

## Agreement State Program

Under the Agreement State Program, some States have signed formal agreements with the NRC that allow the State to assume regulatory authority over certain types of radioactive material. The program was established in 1959, with the first agreement signed in 1962. Once a State signs such an agreement, it is commonly referred to as an Agreement State. Currently, there are 39 Agreement States.

The NRC provides support and assistance to Agreement States, beginning when a State expresses interest in signing an agreement and continuing after an agreement is signed. Although Agreement States assume regulatory authority over some radioactive materials, the NRC interacts with and supports Agreement States through the following actions:

- sponsoring and conducting technical training courses and workshops
- evaluating State regulatory changes to ensure compatibility with NRC requirements
- offering opportunities for early and substantive involvement in NRC rulemaking and other regulatory efforts

While the NRC discontinues its regulatory authority, the agency still maintains an oversight role by periodically reviewing Agreement State programs. This is accomplished through the NRC's Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program, which was established in 1995. The goal of this review is to ensure that States' programs adequately protect public health and safety from radiological hazards and adhere to the NRC's regulatory program. Under the Agreement State Program, the NRC and its State regulatory partners safely and securely regulate over 18,000 radioactive material licenses.



## State Liaison Officer Program

In 1976, the NRC adopted a recommendation from several State organizations, including the National Governors Association, that each Governor appoint a single person to act as a liaison to the NRC to help improve cooperation and two-way communication.

State liaison officers, with support from the NRC staff, perform activities such as the following:

- keeping Governors informed of NRC updates
- coordinating with State and local agencies and counterparts on NRC-related activities
- answering questions from and providing information to the NRC
- providing communication and support to State, local, and Federal emergency agencies during emergencies at NRC-regulated facilities

The State liaison officers have diverse backgrounds and qualifications, and they generally work for State agencies that focus on protecting public health, safety, and the environment. Each regional office of the NRC has designated staff whose main responsibility is to communicate with the State liaison officers in that region.

## Advance Notification of Radioactive Material Shipments

The NRC and the Agreement States have regulations that require their licensees to provide advance notification to the Governor (or the Governor's designated representative), as well as to the Tribal official of participating Tribes (or the Tribal official's designee), before shipping certain types of radioactive material within or across the boundary of the State or the Tribe's reservation. Advance notification is required for shipments of the following:

- Irradiated reactor fuel
- Large quantities of nuclear waste meeting certain criteria
- Specified quantities of other radioactive material

The NRC maintains contact information for all State and Tribal representatives designated to receive the advance notification.

*On the cover: photo at the top right of Limerick Nuclear Power Plant is courtesy of Exelon Nuclear.*