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NRC Completes Safety Review of Construction Permit Application For Hermes 2 Test Reactor Facility in Tennessee

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has completed its final [safety evaluation](#) for Kairos Power's application to build the Hermes 2 advanced test facility at a site in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The evaluation concludes there are no safety aspects that would preclude issuing the construction permit for the facility.

"We finished our review of Hermes 2 design nearly four months ahead of schedule, and using about 60 percent fewer resources than expected, using insights from our previous Kairos review," said Andrea Veil, director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. "We remain committed to applying these sorts of lessons learned to maintain safety while promptly and efficiently processing applications."

The staff will provide the safety evaluation and the final environmental assessment, which is on track to be completed later this summer, to the Commission for the final phase of the licensing process later this year. The Commission will determine whether the staff's review supports the findings necessary to issue the permit. Following its deliberations, the Commission will vote on whether to authorize the staff to issue the permit.

The NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards independently reviewed safety-related aspects of the Kairos application. The committee provided the results of its [review](#) to the Commission on July 17.

The Kairos [application](#) requests permission to build the facility with two 35-megawatt thermal test reactors, similar in design to the test reactor the NRC issued a construction permit for in 2023. The fluoride salt-cooled, high-temperature reactors would share a power generation system. The company will have to submit a separate application for operating licenses in the future.