



NRC NEWS

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NRC Reflects on 2025 Successes

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's accomplishments in 2025 underscore the agency's commitment to enabling the safe and secure use of civilian nuclear energy and radioactive materials through efficient and reliable licensing, oversight, and regulation to benefit society and the environment.

"This past year has been one of fast-moving change and accomplishment at the NRC," said Chairman David Wright. "Our priorities in 2025 included implementing requirements in Executive Orders and the ADVANCE Act while contributing to interagency efforts to meet broader national energy objectives. We'll build on these achievements in 2026 as we modernize our regulatory approach to safely reach licensing decisions faster, using fewer resources."

Reactor licensing highlights included completing the technical review of the TerraPower construction permit application within 18 months. The NRC also approved the NuScale US460 small modular reactor design, and the first-ever return to operational status for a retired reactor, paving the way for a potential Palisades restart. Additionally, the NRC renewed 13 reactor licenses each for an additional 20 years, preserving 12,000 megawatts on the U.S. power grid.

The NRC's strong 2025 performance also covered nuclear fuel facilities, materials and decommissioning programs. Over the past year, the NRC approved six fuel facility requests. This included continued high-assay, low-enriched uranium operations at the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon, Ohio (part of the Department of Energy's HALEU demonstration project), as well as approving Urenco USA's enrichment facility in New Mexico to produce higher-enriched U-235 for advanced reactor and accident-tolerant fuel.

The NRC also modernized fuel cycle facility oversight, safely reducing upcoming inspection hours by 40 percent at the Honeywell conversion facility using risk-informed insights. The agency prepared for commercial fusion facilities by laying the foundation for a clear, predictable regulatory framework. The NRC's 2025 success story continued with an innovative 6-month review to license a first-of-a-kind remediation technology to address abandoned uranium mine waste. The agency also authorized Connecticut as the 40th Agreement State, allowing it to license and oversee radioactive materials within its borders.

These accomplishments were driven in large part by an updated mission statement and accompanying implementation guidance.

Significant NRC 2025 Accomplishments

Operating Reactors

- The NRC authorized license renewals for 13 reactors in Ohio (1 reactor), South Carolina (4 reactors), Wisconsin (2 reactors), Alabama (3 reactors) and Illinois (3 reactors). Collectively, these 13 reactors will deliver 12,000 megawatts of power to the grid for 20 more years.
- The NRC authorized the restart of the Palisades Nuclear Power plant in Michigan - the first-ever regulatory approval of a reactor to restart after entering decommissioning. The NRC's experience with Palisades is also being applied to two additional reactor restart projects, the Crane Clean Energy Center in Pennsylvania and Duane Arnold Energy Center in Iowa.
- The NRC completed over 700 licensing actions for the 94 nuclear reactors in operation across the United States, 90 percent of which were completed ahead of schedule, reflecting efficiencies driven by the ADVANCE Act and Executive Order 14300. Since implementing these efficiencies, the NRC has lowered project estimates by roughly 40 percent for schedules and 35 percent for staff hours, while continuing to meet safety standards.

New and Advanced Reactors

- The NRC completed review of the construction permit application for TerraPower's Kemmerer Unit 1 facility, the agency's first approval of a non-light water reactor in the last 50 years and the first next-generation advanced power reactor. Kemmerer Unit 1 review was completed in 18 months (nine months ahead of schedule and 11 percent under budget), facilitated in part by changes directed by EO 14300 – specifically, streamlining the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards review and environmental review efficiencies.
- The NRC issued a FY25 construction permit for the Kairos Hermes 2 test reactor facility, a fluoride salt cooled high temperature reactor. This built off work done in FY24 to issue the construction permit for Hermes 1, a very similar design, resulting in a 60 percent reduction in resources between the two reviews and completion in only 10 months.
- The NRC completed its review of NuScale's US460 Standard Design Approval, a light water small modular reactor, in 22 months (two months ahead of schedule and 13 percent under budget).
- The NRC is actively reviewing the construction permit application for Project Long Mott in Texas, establishing an 18-month or shorter schedule for the review.
- The NRC issued a direct final rule extending the expiration of design certifications from 15 (or 20) to 40 years (e.g., extended the AP1000 design certification), and the Commission is considering the Part 53 "Risk-Informed, Technology-Inclusive Regulatory Framework for Commercial Nuclear Plants," proposed rule.

New and Advanced Reactors (Cont.)

- The NRC is actively working with Fermi America on their combined license application and an applicant-led environmental impact statement pilot for a four-unit Westinghouse AP1000 plant in Texas.
- The NRC is actively working with Westinghouse to prepare for an expedited review of an updated Design Certification for the AP1000. Furthermore, the NRC staff is working to ensure the NRC is prepared for the anticipated submittal of 10 new applications.
- The NRC continues to engage with dozens of companies and organizations, including X-Energy, NuScale, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, and TerraPower, to support future applications.

Fuel Facilities, Decommissioning, Nuclear Materials, and Environmental Reviews

- The NRC completed over 100 licensing actions this year related to facilities, new fuels, storage, and transportation; and conducted over 150 inspections for fuel facilities and storage and transportation, including 6 new fuel facility approvals and 4 new transportation approvals.
- The NRC delivered robust environmental reviews in less time and with less resources, realizing up to a 50 percent reduction in resources and schedules for license renewal, 40 percent schedule reduction and 50 percent resource reduction for materials reviews, and a 35 percent schedule and 40 percent cost reduction for new reactor reviews.
- The NRC issued a license for a first-of-a-kind remediation technology for abandoned uranium mine waste.
- The NRC issued the Agreement to make Connecticut the 40th Agreement State.
- The NRC completed a fusion vision and strategy, roadmap, and project plan to support development of a regulatory framework to license fusion machines.
- The NRC issued licensing guidance for four emerging medical technologies ensuring consistent licensing across National Materials Program and patient access to new radiotherapies and radiopharmaceuticals.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission was created as an expert, technical agency to protect public health, safety, and security, and regulate the civilian use of nuclear materials, including enabling the deployment of nuclear power for the benefit of society. Among other responsibilities, the agency issues licenses, conducts inspections, initiates and enforces regulations, and plans for incident response. The global gold standard for nuclear regulation, the NRC is collaborating with interagency partners to implement reforms outlined in new Executive Orders and the ADVANCE Act to streamline agency activities and enhance efficiency.