



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters

Washington, DC 20555-0001



www.nrc.gov ■ opa.resource@nrc.gov

No: 26-006

January 9, 2026

CONTACT: [Scott Burnell](#), 301-415-8200

NRC Makes Belews Creek Early Site Permit Application Available for Public Review

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received an Early Site Permit application from Duke Energy for the Belews Creek site in North Carolina. The application is now available for public review on the NRC [website](#).

The company submitted the application on Dec. 30, seeking an ESP that would accommodate advanced small modular or non-light water reactors with a maximum total electrical output of 2,250 megawatts. The 1,000-acre site is adjacent to the Belews Creek Steam Station, an existing coal/natural gas power plant. An ESP resolves site safety, environmental protection, and emergency preparedness issues independent of a specific nuclear plant design, enabling early resolution of site suitability issues. Duke would be required to file additional applications for a construction permit or combined operating license in the future to allow nuclear power plant construction or operation.

The NRC staff is reviewing the application to determine if it is complete and acceptable for processing. If the application is determined to be sufficient, the staff will docket it and notify Duke of the staff's planned resources and schedule, not to exceed 18 months, for the technical review. The NRC would then publish a notice of opportunity to request an adjudicatory hearing on the application before the NRC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board.

Information about the NRC's interactions with Duke regarding the Belews Creek project is available on the NRC [website](#).

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.