



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters



Washington, DC. 20555-0001
www.nrc.gov ■ opa.resource@nrc.gov

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CONTACT: [Office of Public Affairs](#), 301-415-8200

NRC Receives Westinghouse Application to Update AP1000 Design Certification

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received an application from Westinghouse Electric Company to renew and update the design certification for its AP1000 reactor, incorporating construction and operating experience from recently completed U.S. reactors. The application seeks to align the certified AP1000 design with the as-built configuration of Vogtle Units 3 and 4, which entered service in 2023 and 2024.

The [submittal](#) would establish a validated baseline that could facilitate streamlined licensing for future applicants to replicate, which could lead to faster licensing approvals, lower regulatory uncertainty and costs, and increased deployment of new nuclear plants to meet the rising electricity demand.

The NRC is evaluating 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 begin a detailed technical review.

The NRC first certified the AP1000 design in 2006, and it is valid through 2046. Westinghouse's application requests a 40-year renewal of the certification while incorporating design changes approved during the construction and licensing of Vogtle Units 3 and 4.

During the construction of Vogtle Units 3 and 4, Westinghouse and the licensee identified design changes requiring NRC review and approval through license amendments. Many of these changes represented departures from the original certified design.

Future applications referencing the updated AP1000 should benefit from efficiencies introduced through standardized, nth-of-a-kind licensing and the incorporation of lessons learned from Vogtle's licensing, construction, and startup.

The planned amendment process is part of the NRC's broader effort to streamline design certification updates and combined license application reviews for reactors referencing approved designs, enhancing regulatory predictability while maintaining the agency's high safety standards. More information on that effort can be found in [SECY-26-0034](#).

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 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.