



NRC NEWS

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NRC Streamlines Environmental Reviews with Two New Rules

ROCKVILLE, Md.—The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued two final rules under the National Environmental Policy Act. These rules update categorical exclusions and finalize the new reactor generic environmental impact statement, actions that streamline the reviews while maintaining environmental compliance.

“Finalizing these rules strengthens our ability to assess environmental impacts in a smarter, more consistent, and more predictable way,” said Executive Director for Operations Mike King. “By focusing our time on the most significant issues for people and the environment, we continue protecting communities while enabling the safe and efficient deployment of nuclear technologies to meet our rapidly growing energy needs.”

The final rule [affirmed](#) by the Commission today establishes the new reactor GEIS framework for all reactor types and will simplify future reviews. The GEIS uses plant and site parameters to identify environmental issues common to new reactors and those issues needing project-specific analysis.

Previously on March 30, the NRC issued a [final rule](#) that eliminates the preparation of environmental assessments for certain licensing, regulatory, and administrative actions that do not significantly affect the environment. Eliminating these unnecessary environmental assessments reduces administrative burdens and accelerates regulatory decisions.

These regulatory changes reflect the NRC’s broader initiative to modernize and optimize its NEPA review process. In line with Executive Order 14300, the agency is conducting a comprehensive review of its environmental regulations and plans to release another [proposed rule](#) for public comment in the near future.

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.