



No: 26-047
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April 24, 2026

EO14300 Rulemaking

NRC Proposes a New Licensing Framework to Accelerate Safe, High-Volume Deployment of Microreactors

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission today announced a groundbreaking [proposed rule](#) that enables the safe, rapid deployment of microreactors and other reactors with comparable risk profiles. The proposed regulatory framework, Part 57, is a streamlined, risk-informed, and flexible licensing pathway that maintains strong protection of public health, safety, and security. Developed to implement Executive Order 14300 and the ADVANCE Act, the proposal responds to the growing demand for innovative, smaller-scale reactors and is designed to support safe and efficient high-volume licensing. It recognizes the distinct safety profiles of microreactors compared to traditional nuclear plants.

“This regulatory framework for microreactors marks a major step toward modernizing the licensing process for advanced nuclear reactors,” Chairman Ho K. Nieh said. “Part 57 is designed to deploy microreactors with safety, scale, and speed.”

The NRC and industry expect to save \$3.76–\$11.84 billion (depending on discount rate), mainly by reducing exemption requests and streamlining reviews. The NRC projects accelerated licensing and deployment timelines of potentially 6–12 months for construction permits and operating licenses.

A few key features of the proposed Part 57 rule include:

- Requesting approval of fleets of identical reactors,
- Allowing appropriate use of alternative design standards and programs for novel reactor operation,
- Streamlining environmental reviews for projects with demonstrated minimal impacts, and
- Providing a pathway for limited construction prior to receiving an NRC permit.

The Federal Register notice is slated for May 6; however, that is subject to change. The NRC intends to hold a public meeting on the proposed rule soon.

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.