NRC NEWS
Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters
Washington, DC. 20555-0001
www.nrc.gov ■ opa.resource@nrc.gov

No: 26-056 May 20, 2026
CONTACT: Office of Public Affairs, 301-415-8200

EO14300 Rulemaking

NRC Marks One Year of Modernization Under Presidential Order

Rockville, Md. — One year ago, President Trump signed Executive Order 14300 directing the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to cut red tape and enable nuclear energy deployment in America. While the agency's work continues, there are already tangible results: a series of historic licensing firsts, sweeping regulatory reforms, and a restructured agency built for speed without sacrificing safety. The work builds upon successes of the bi-partisan ADVANCE Act of 2024.

"EO 14300 was the catalyst," said NRC Chairman Ho K. Nieh. "In twelve months, the NRC is delivering an unprecedented suite of new rules around the entire nuclear lifecycle. We are designing these rules to accelerate safe deployment and expansion of nuclear technologies. This is how the NRC supports America's energy security and global nuclear energy leadership."

Licensing Firsts

In the past year alone, the NRC achieved several historic milestones:

- Issued the first commercial advanced reactor construction permit in decades, to TerraPower's Kemmerer facility.
- Granted TrisoX the first-ever license to commercially manufacture tristructural isotropic (TRISO) fuel for advanced reactors.
- Approved the restart of the Palisades nuclear plant — the first time in U.S. history the NRC has approved a decommissioning plant to be returned to operational status.
- Authorized license renewals for 18 reactors, securing nearly 17,000 megawatts of power for 20 additional years.
- Completed the fastest-ever license renewal review finishing the Robinson plant renewal in under 12 months.

New Pathways for New Technologies

The NRC also built entirely new regulatory infrastructure designed for efficiency:

- **Part 53** – Finalized in March, this is the first new reactor licensing framework in decades. It creates a flexible, technology-inclusive pathway for advanced reactors and was completed nearly two years ahead of the congressional deadline set by the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act.
- **Part 57 (Microreactors)** – A proposed framework designed for high-volume, streamlined licensing of smaller, lower-risk reactors that have different safety profiles than traditional plants.
- **Fusion Licensing** – The NRC proposed the nation's first-ever regulatory framework for fusion machines, paving the way for an entirely new class of energy technology.

Regulatory Reform at Scale

At the same time, the NRC launched a wholesale review of its regulations to eliminate outdated, redundant, or unnecessarily burdensome rules. Of 27 planned rulemakings, the agency has finalized 5 rules and published 7 proposed rules for public comment.

Final Rules include:

- **Legal practices and procedures** – increased flexibility, streamlined hearing processes and rescinded rules that were inconsistent with or duplicated legal requirements.
- **Sunset Rule** – inserted conditional sunset dates consistent with applicable law, including for duplicative and outdated Aircraft Impact Assessment requirements.
- **Freedom of Information Act** – aligned with federal best practices and clarified how the NRC's FOIA public liaison assists people who request documents.

Proposed Rules open for public comment include:

- **Review of authorized reactor designs** – to streamline NRC review of demonstration reactor designs authorized by the Departments of Energy or War.
- **Physical protection of radioactive materials** – to eliminate outdated background check and reporting provisions, and right-size training and administrative requirements.
- **Contested hearings** – to accelerate timelines, simplify procedures, and reduce burdens.
- **Fees** – to establish fixed caps on certain fees and amend licensing, inspection, special project, and annual fees charged to applicants and licensees.

Rules under development will address:

- **Radiation protection** – to reconsider reliance on the linear no-threshold model and the "as low as reasonably achievable" standard for radiation exposure.
- **Reactor oversight** – to streamline construction and siting, introduce risk-informed and performance-based licensing alternatives, expand flexibility, and update various provisions to better accommodate advanced reactor technologies.
- **National Environmental Policy Act implementation** – to streamline procedures, eliminate unnecessary burdens, and expand flexibilities while complying with environmental mandates.
- **Materials** – to streamline licensing for DOE-authorized fuel facilities, establish a reprocessing licensing framework, and lower the burden for registration and decommissioning assurance for sealed and unsealed sources.
- **Low-Level Waste disposal** – to permit use of site-specific technical analyses to develop site-specific waste acceptance criteria and authorize disposal of greater-than-class C low level waste.
- **In Situ Recovery** – to codify risk-informed groundwater protection standards for uranium ISR facilities and reduce post-restoration monitoring.
- **Transportation package requirements** – to modernize requirements for large fissile material packages to accommodate transport of irradiated microreactors and similar packages.
- **Export** – to streamline the regulations on the export of nuclear reactor equipment and materials.

An Agency Transformed

A January 2025 update to the NRC's Mission Statement reaffirmed its safety and security focus while explicitly recognizing the agency's role in enabling nuclear technology. The NRC has also reorganized internally to align resources with emerging technologies and rebalanced its Reactor Oversight Process to match oversight intensity with actual industry safety performance.

The past year makes clear that rigorous safety regulation and rapid innovation can, and must, go together as America races to meet its energy future.

For more information on NRC modernization initiatives and opportunities to comment on proposed rules, visit our 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 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.