



NRC NEWS

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EO14300 Rulemaking

NRC Proposes Major Modernization of Environmental Review Process

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has [proposed](#) the most comprehensive update to its environmental review regulations in decades, narrowing environmental reviews to impacts within the agency’s statutory authority and expanding opportunities to streamline licensing for new nuclear projects while maintaining environmental protections. The proposal also expands the use of categorical exclusions for certain actions, including some new reactor projects, where the NRC has determined they normally do not result in significant environmental impacts.

“This proposal focuses our environmental reviews on what matters most,” Chairman Ho K. Nieh said. “By concentrating on impacts the NRC can address, we’ll strengthen environmental protection while making licensing reviews more timely and predictable.”

Together with the NRC’s recently completed rules on categorical exclusions and generic environmental findings for new reactors, this proposal represents a significant modernization of environmental regulations. Collectively, these actions create a more focused, efficient and predictable framework for reviewing future nuclear projects while maintaining compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the NRC’s environmental responsibilities.

The proposal implements recent amendments to the law, reflects recent court decisions and advances the regulatory modernization goals of Executive Order 14300.

The NRC will accept public comments until Aug. 21 and plans to hold a public meeting during the comment period.

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.