

ONE-STEP LICENSING OF NUCLEAR PLANTS SHORT-CIRCUITS SAFETY

Old Nuclear Power Plant Licensing Process

Under Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 50 (10 CFR 50)

All commercial nuclear power plants now operating in the U.S. have been licensed under the two step process under 10 CFR Part 50.

- 1) Construction permit: Application submitted by the nuclear plant operator to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission with detailed information about the proposed reactor and the proposed site including:
- Site characteristics: population, meteorology, geology, hydrology
 - Power plant design
 - Plant accident scenarios
 - Applicant's qualifications to operate the plant
 - Radiological discharges to air, water and soil
 - Emergency response plans

An environmental review (under 10 CFR 51) is done. A public hearing must be held.

2) Operating License: Application submitted to the NRC with updated safety analysis. Notice published in Federal Register with second opportunity for hearings. **Process allows consideration of safety and health issues based on new information gained in construction permit process.**

New Nuclear Power Plant Licensing Process

Under Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 52 (10 CFR 52)

In 1989 The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission established the Combined Operating License which authorizes construction and conditional operation of a nuclear power facility. The COL combines **construction permit** and a **plant operation license**, a one-step license. Previously, a nuclear plant operator was required to obtain a construction permit before applying for a plant operating license (under 10 CFR Part 50).

10 CFR Part 52 allows Early Site Permits

An ESP allows a nuclear power plant license applicant to: 1) obtain approval for a reactor site without specifying the design of reactors that could be built there, and 2) use certified standard plant designs which can be used as pre-approved designs.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission says that the benefits of the new license process are “regulatory efficiency” and “greater predictability” in the licensing of nuclear power plants.

We say that one-step licensing reduces the opportunity for public involvement in decision-making and insulates site approval from questions about plant safety, public health, and many other issues.

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