



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC ORDERS DECOMMISSIONING NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AND GE FUEL STORAGE FACILITY TO ENHANCE SECURITY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued Orders requiring all decommissioning commercial nuclear power plants with spent fuel stored in water-filled pools and a spent nuclear fuel storage facility using pool storage to implement interim compensatory security measures for the current threat environment.

Some of the requirements formalize a series of security measures that NRC licensees had taken in response to advisories issued by the NRC in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Additional security enhancements, which have emerged from the on-going comprehensive security review, are also spelled out in the Orders.

The security requirements will remain in effect until the Commission determines that the level of threat has changed, or additional security measures are needed following a comprehensive re-evaluation of current safeguards and security programs. The Commission views these compensatory measures as prudent, interim steps to address the current threat environment in a consistent manner.

The Commission recognizes that the licensees have voluntarily and responsibly implemented additional security measures following the events of September 11. But the Commission determined that it should require certain security measures by Order so that they are maintained within the established regulatory framework.

The specific security measures addressed by the Orders are understandably sensitive, but generally include requirements for increased patrols, augmented security forces and capabilities, additional security posts, installation of additional physical barriers, vehicle checks at greater stand-off distances, enhanced coordination with law enforcement and military authorities, and more restrictive site access controls for personnel.

The Orders are effective immediately. Licensees are required to start implementation and complete all enhancements within six months. Many of the enhancements have already been implemented, since they were contained in security advisories previously issued by the NRC.

Within 20 days, licensees are required to provide NRC with a schedule for achieving full compliance. Licensees must also notify NRC within 20 days, and justify in writing, if they are unable to comply with any of the requirements of the Order, if compliance with any requirement is not considered necessary in their specific circumstances, or if implementation of any requirement would cause the licensee to be in violation of the provisions of any Commission regulation or the facility license, or adversely impact safe operation of the facility.

Immediately after the September 11 attacks, the NRC advised all of the nuclear power plants and other key nuclear facilities to go to the highest level of security, which they promptly did. Specific measures were subsequently defined in a number of advisories, and have been subject to audit by NRC security experts. The NRC is continuing to coordinate with other Federal and State agencies on protection of critical infrastructure within the United States.

A copy of the non-safeguards portion of the order will be posted on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/safeguards/safeguards.html>

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