



NRC NEWS

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NRC WILL RENEW VERMONT YANKEE OPERATING LICENSE FOR AN ADDITIONAL 20 YEARS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has voted to conclude the legal proceeding regarding renewal of the operating license for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station near Brattleboro, Vt., for an additional 20 years. The NRC staff expects to issue the renewed license soon; the renewed license will expire March 21, 2032.

“This is the final step in the NRC’s detailed technical and legal process of examining whether it’s appropriate to issue a renewed license,” said NRC Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko. “Since there are other approval processes outside the NRC, we’ll continue to ensure Vermont Yankee is meeting the appropriate public health and safety standards regardless of the reactor’s ultimate status.”

The decision to renew the license comes after the NRC staff’s thorough and extensive safety and environmental reviews of the application, submitted Jan. 27, 2006, by the plant’s operator, Entergy Nuclear Operations. The application and the staff reviews were also examined by the NRC’s Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), an independent body of nuclear safety experts that advises the NRC, and was the subject of an adjudicatory hearing by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB), a quasi-judicial arm of the NRC that handles licensing matters.

The NRC staff issued its Safety Evaluation Report (SER) on the Vermont Yankee license renewal application, [NUREG-1907](#), in May 2008, and issued a supplement to the SER in September 2009. The staff is in the process of issuing a second SER supplement, which will be available soon. The staff issued its Vermont Yankee-specific supplement to the generic license renewal Environmental Impact Statement (NUREG-1437, [Supplement 30](#)) in August 2007.

In September 2006 the ASLB accepted requests by the State of Vermont and the New England Coalition (NEC) for a hearing challenging the renewal of the Vermont Yankee license. Once the NRC technical staff concluded its review of the renewal application, the Board conducted its evidentiary hearing in Newfane, Vt., in July 2008. The Board issued its initial decision in November 2008, requiring Entergy to revise its metal fatigue analysis for two important nozzles. Entergy submitted its revised analyses in March 2009, and NEC challenged the adequacy of the new analysis. In July 2009 the Board denied NEC’s new challenge.

Meanwhile, the NRC staff and NEC appealed various aspects of the Board decisions. In July 2010 the Commission rejected all of the appeals except one, which was returned to the Board. During consideration of that remaining issue, NEC requested that a new and different contention be admitted. In October 2010 the Board ruled on the remaining issue and rejected NEC's new contention. NEC appealed that ruling; the Commission's vote today affirms the Board's denial of NEC's new contention and concludes the hearing.

Vermont Yankee will be the 63rd reactor license renewed by the NRC. Twelve other applications are currently under review. Information about the license renewal process is available on the NRC website's [Reactor License Renewal page](#).

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