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NRC Authorizes Vogtle Unit 3 Fuel Loading and Operation

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has [authorized](#) Southern Nuclear Operating Company to load nuclear fuel and begin operation at Vogtle Unit 3 in Georgia, the first reactor to reach this point in the agency's combined license process. SNC recently informed the [agency](#) that the company completed the inspections, tests, analyses, and acceptance criteria needed to show Vogtle Unit 3 can begin safe operations.

“This is the first time we’ve authorized a reactor’s initial startup through our Part 52 licensing process,” said Andrea Veil, Director of the NRC’s Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. “Before authorization, we independently verified that Vogtle Unit 3 has been properly built and will protect public health and safety when it transitions to operation. Our resident inspectors at Vogtle will keep a close eye on Unit 3 as the fuel load and startup testing move forward. We’re focused on safety so the country can use Vogtle’s additional carbon-free electricity. We will maintain this focus as we license the next generation of new reactors.”

The NRC’s decision moves Vogtle Unit 3, adjacent to the operating Units 1 and 2, near Waynesboro, Georgia, out of the construction reactor oversight program and into the operating reactor oversight process. Vogtle Unit 4 remains under construction.

The [information](#) supporting the agency’s decision to allow Southern Nuclear Operating Company to load fuel and begin operation of Vogtle Unit 3 is available on the NRC’s website, which also has [information](#) on the review and issuance of the combined licenses for Vogtle Units 3 and 4.