



NRC NEWS

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WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC COMPANY SUBMITS APPLICATION FOR DESIGN CERTIFICATION OF ITS AP1000 NUCLEAR REACTOR

The Westinghouse Electric Company has submitted an application for design certification of its AP1000 standard plant design.

The AP1000 design is for a nuclear power plant capable of producing about 1,100 megawatts of electricity. The plant features enhanced safety systems that rely on gravity and pressure differentials to safely shut down the reactor or mitigate the effects of an accident. It is designed for a 60-year operating life.

With the certification, if granted, a utility that wished to build and operate a new nuclear power plant could choose to use the design and reference it in a license application. Safety issues within the scope of the certified design are not subject to litigation with respect to that individual license application, although site-specific environmental impacts associated with building and operating the plant at a particular location could be. NRC has certified three other standard reactor designs.

In submitting its application for design certification, Westinghouse referenced the AP600 standard design, which was certified by NRC in 1999. It made changes necessitated by the requirements of the larger size of the AP1000. Additional details will be available in a notice to be published shortly in the *Federal Register*.

NRC staff will perform an acceptance review to determine whether the application contains sufficient information to be processed. If it is found acceptable, NRC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing its acceptance and docketing of the application. The staff will review the application, request any additional information necessary, then issue a draft Safety Evaluation Report to address any safety questions. It could then issue a final Safety Evaluation Report if all technical and safety questions have been resolved. This design can then be certified through NRC's rulemaking process, which includes an opportunity for public participation. The certification process is described in Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 52, Subpart B.

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