

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Mission

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) was established by Congress in 1974 as an independent regulatory agency. The NRC licenses and regulates the Nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to protect public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment.

Chairman's Message



When it comes to the civilian use of radioactive materials, the NRC and the States have complementary roles. I am pleased with the effectiveness of this relationship and am confident that our collaboration results in people and the environment being well protected. The NRC values this relationship with the States, and we will continue to strengthen it through effective communication and ongoing engagement.

The NRC's regulatory mission covers three main areas:

Reactors - Commercial reactors for generating electric power and research and test reactors used for research, testing, and training.

Materials - Uses of nuclear materials in medical, industrial, and academic settings and facilities that produce nuclear fuel.

Waste - Transportation, storage, and disposal of nuclear materials and waste, and decommissioning of nuclear facilities from service.

NRC locations:

The NRC's headquarters office is located in Rockville, MD, and its regional offices are located in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and Arlington, TX.

For additional NRC information see:

The agency's public Web site:
<http://www.nrc.gov>

State programs page:
<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/state-tribal.html>

<http://nrc-stp.ornl.gov/>

Emergency Preparedness and Response page:
<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/emerg-preparedness.html>

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



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- STAY CONNECTED



STATE PROGRAMS AT THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



The NRC's Interactions with States

The NRC has many policies and programs that focus on States' interactions. Through activities such as the ones described in this brochure and related efforts, the NRC strives to:

- Keep States informed on topics of mutual interest.
- Provide States with opportunities to participate in the NRC's regulatory processes.
- Provide assistance to State activities when appropriate.
- Maintain oversight when States assume authority from the NRC for specific activities.

The NRC has dedicated staff members in its various offices who routinely interact with their State counterparts through meetings, conferences, and outreach activities. They also conduct many State-specific communications using a variety of avenues. In addition, NRC staff members maintain contact with many State organizations and groups. Through these interactions, the NRC staff works to keep the agency and the States informed of respective activities, views, and interests to support ongoing cooperation.

Coordination on Emergency Preparedness & Incidence Response

The NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) cooperate on radiological emergency planning and preparedness at NRC-licensed facilities. Under a joint memorandum of understanding, FEMA has lead responsibility for assessing State and local (offsite) emergency planning and reporting the results to the NRC, which are factored into the NRC's decisionmaking processes as appropriate.

The NRC's Incident Response Program regularly coordinates with States by participating in licensee emergency preparedness exercises. If an actual event that required NRC response occurred, the NRC would communicate with and support State and local authorities as needed.

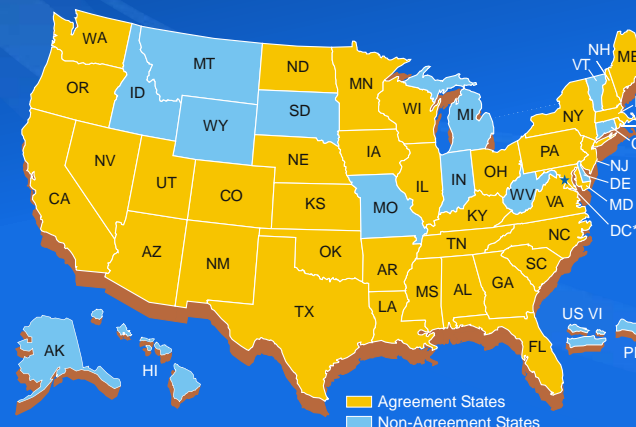
Agreement State Program

Under this program, States sign formal agreements with the NRC to assume regulatory authority over certain types of radioactive material. The program was established in 1959, with the first agreement signed in 1962. Once a State signs such an agreement, it is commonly referred to as an Agreement State. Currently, there are 37 Agreement States.

The NRC provides support and assistance to Agreement States, which starts when a State expresses interest to sign an agreement and continues after an agreement is signed. For example, the NRC:

- Sponsors and conducts technical training courses and workshops.
- Evaluates State rule changes to ensure compatibility with NRC requirements.
- Provides opportunities for early and substantive involvement in NRC rulemaking and other regulatory efforts.

While the NRC relinquishes regulatory authority, the agency still maintains an oversight role by conducting periodic reviews of Agreement State programs. This is accomplished through the NRC's Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program, which was established in 1995. The goal of this process is to ensure that States' programs protect public health and safety and operate in a manner consistent with the NRC's regulatory program.



State Liaison Officer Program

In 1976, the NRC adopted a recommendation from several State organizations, including the National Governors Association, that each Governor appoint a single person to act as a liaison to the NRC to help improve cooperation and two-way communication.

State Liaison Officers, with support from NRC staff, perform a number of activities, such as:

- Keeping Governors informed of NRC updates.
- Coordinating with State and local agencies and counterparts on NRC-related activities.
- Answering questions from and providing information to the NRC.
- Providing communication and support to State, local, and Federal emergency agencies during emergency events at NRC-regulated facilities.

The State Liaison Officers possess diverse backgrounds and qualifications, and they generally work for State agencies that focus on protecting public health and safety and the environment.

Advance Notice of Radioactive Material Shipments

The NRC and Agreement States have regulations that require their licensees to provide notice to the Governor, or the Governor's designated representative, before some shipments of radioactive material. Advance notice is required for shipments of:

- Irradiated reactor fuel.
- Large quantities of nuclear waste meeting certain criteria.
- Risk-significant quantities of radioactive material to, through, or within a State.

The NRC maintains a list of the contact information for the representatives in each State who have been designated to receive the advance notice.