



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters



Washington, DC. 20555-0001
www.nrc.gov ■ opa.resource@nrc.gov

No: 26-070

July 1, 2026

CONTACT: [Office of Public Affairs](#), 301-415-8200

EO14300 Rulemaking

NRC Proposes Modernization of Radiation Protection Rules, Reaffirms Current Safety Standards

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission today [proposed](#) an update to its radiation protection regulations that would maintain existing public and worker dose limits while reducing unnecessary regulatory burden and modernizing requirements to reflect current science and decades of operating experience.

The proposal would replace the longstanding “as low as reasonably achievable” (ALARA) principle with clearer, more objective requirements focused on compliance with regulatory precautions and established dose limits, which themselves are set well below levels associated with known health effects. The agency concluded that retaining ALARA as a separate regulatory expectation can lead to additional costs and complexity without a measurable safety benefit.

“We’re raising the standard for regulatory clarity, not lowering the standard for safety,” Chairman Ho K. Nieh said. “Our radiation dose limits remain unchanged—what we’re eliminating is unnecessary ambiguity.”

The proposed rule would establish a more risk-informed and performance-based framework for radiation protection by:

- Adopting a graded approach to dose management based on risk and operational circumstances.
- Providing licensees greater flexibility to use modern methods for evaluating radiation doses to workers and the public.
- Expanding options for managing occupational radiation exposure.
- Allowing caregivers of patients receiving treatments involving radioactive materials to voluntarily receive higher doses, improving patient care while maintaining appropriate protections.

The proposal is part of the NRC’s broader effort to modernize regulations, reduce unnecessary burden, and ensure requirements remain aligned with current science and operational experience while maintaining the agency’s commitment to protecting public health and safety.

The NRC will accept public comments for 45 days following publication in the Federal Register and plans to hold a public meeting during the comment period.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission was created as an expert, technical agency to protect public health, safety, and security, and regulate the civilian use of nuclear materials, including enabling the deployment of nuclear power for the benefit of society. Among other responsibilities, the agency issues licenses, conducts inspections, initiates and enforces regulations, and plans for incident response. The NRC is collaborating with interagency partners to implement reforms outlined in new Executive Orders and the ADVANCE Act to streamline agency activities and enhance efficiency.