



Federal regulators have approved a nuclear reactor designed by Westinghouse Electric that could power the first nuclear plants built from scratch in this country in more than three decades.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission unanimously approved the AP1000 reactor Thursday. The certification, effective immediately, will be valid for 15 years.

NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko said the newly approved design would ensure safety through simplified, passive security functions and other features. He said plants using the design could withstand damage from an airplane crash without significant release of radioactive materials — an issue that gained attention after the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Approval of the design is a major step forward for utility companies in Georgia, Florida and the Carolinas that have billions of dollars riding on plans to build AP1000 reactors in the Southeast. Without NRC approval, the utilities could not have gotten a license to build their plants.

Federal officials approved an earlier version of the AP1000 reactor in 2006, but it was never built in the United States. Four AP1000 reactors are now under construction in China.

TVNL Comment: Safe? That's what they said at Fukushima, isn't it? Isn't it what they're saying about fracking prodedures? Don't they always lie? Just asking...

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