



NRC NEWS

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NRC Issues License to Holtec International for Consolidated Spent Nuclear Fuel Interim Storage Facility in New Mexico

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a license to Holtec International to construct and operate a consolidated interim storage facility for spent nuclear fuel in Lea County, New Mexico.

The license, issued May 9, authorizes the company to receive, possess, transfer and store 500 canisters holding approximately 8,680 metric tons of commercial spent nuclear fuel for 40 years. The company said it plans to eventually store up to 10,000 canisters in an additional 19 phases. Each expansion phase would require a license amendment with additional NRC safety and environmental reviews.

The spent fuel must be stored in canisters and cask systems certified by the NRC as meeting standards for protection against leakage, radiation dose rates, and criticality under normal and accident conditions. The canisters are required to be sealed prior to arrival at the facility. They will be inspected upon arrival and will remain sealed during onsite handling and storage activities.

The NRC's review of the license application included a technical safety and security review, an environmental impact review and adjudication before an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board. A safety evaluation report, documenting the technical review, is being issued along with the license. A final environmental impact statement was published last July and supplemented in October. The environmental study included extensive public input during its development and during the comment phase. The adjudication resolved contentions filed by several local and national petitioners.

Information about the Holtec application and the NRC's review is available on the [NRC website](#). Licensing documents will also be posted on this site.

The NRC has previously issued similar licenses for away-from-reactor storage installations. Private Fuel Storage received a license in 2006, but was never constructed. The NRC issued a license in September 2021 to Interim Storage Partners LLC for a proposed storage site in Andrews, Texas. ISP has not yet initiated construction.