



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC ISSUES SECURITY ORDER TO RESEARCH AND TEST REACTORS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, in accordance with the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, has issued an immediately effective Order imposing additional fingerprinting and criminal history check requirements on the nation's research and test reactors.

Research and test reactors must now ensure people currently allowed unescorted access to the facilities, or people requesting such access, are fingerprinted and undergo a criminal history check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The NRC already requires these facilities to perform these checks on employees with access to sensitive security information.

"This is one of many steps the NRC has taken in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, to keep U.S. research reactors secure," said NRC Chairman Dale E. Klein. "Based on the staff's work and my earlier experience overseeing the research reactor program at the University of Texas at Austin, I believe the level of security is appropriate for these educational facilities to continue safely serving their students, their communities and the country."

"Unescorted access" means a person could control the radioactive material to be protected at the research reactor without being detected by several kinds of security systems or personnel. The Order requires that the results of the criminal history check can be reviewed only by an NRC-approved individual at the facility. If an employee has a recently completed criminal history check, an additional check would not be required.

Facilities covered by the Order have 20 days to establish a fingerprinting program. These facilities must notify the NRC at the end of those 20 days whether they will be able to comply with the Order, or explain why specific provisions of the Order are unnecessary at a facility. The NRC is also planning to propose revising its regulations to impose the Order's requirements on a permanent basis.

The Order will be available on the NRC's Web site at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/enforcement/security/> .

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