

The Future of Nuclear Power

2026 Update Survey

Executive Summary

Nuclear carbon-free energy is essential to a clean, reliable and affordable energy system. Nuclear generation is critical to the reliability and affordability of the electricity sector and advanced nuclear presents opportunities for the entire economy. Demand for and advancements in nuclear technology in the United States have grown exponentially in the last five years. With the emergence of greatly increased electrical demand over the past year, the interest in the reliable 24/7 energy that nuclear energy can provide has increased even more.

In early 2023, NEI conducted a survey to obtain a better sense of the impact federal actions are having on industry activities underway or in planning to extend the life and performance of the current fleet of reactors and to provide insights into plans to extend the U.S. fleet of reactors. The results were summarized in the [Future of Nuclear Power 2023 Baseline Survey](#).

This survey was performed in 2024, and again in 2025 to provide a measure of how interest has changed since the 2023 Baseline Survey. Both the [2024 Futures Survey](#) and [2025 Futures Survey](#) demonstrated a growing need and interest in new nuclear generation.

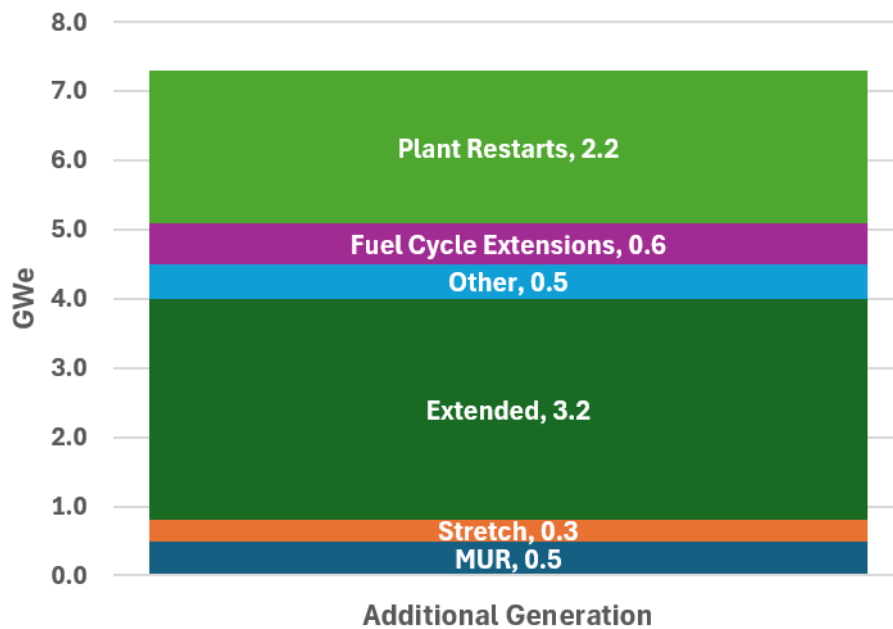
The survey was repeated, once again, in 2026. As this report shows, the interest in nuclear generation has increased even more than was shown in the 2025 survey and planning has become more defined.

The 2026 survey provides the following key insights for the operating fleet:

- Greater than 97% of the 95 units surveyed are considering or actively working toward approval to operate for at least 80 years. This is an increase over the 2025 result and confirms that the vast majority of the current fleet plan to operate to 2050 or beyond.
- Greater than 85% of units surveyed have a level of interest/planning for power uprates. This is higher than the 2025 survey and significantly higher than the 50% seen in the 2023 survey. The cumulative total of these uprates and other facility changes could provide over 5 GWe of carbon-free nuclear energy in the coming decade.
- Nearly half of sites in the survey have varying levels of interest/planning for one or more of the enabling changes identified in the survey (risk-informed LOCA, extended fuel cycle using ATF, extended fuel cycle without ATF).

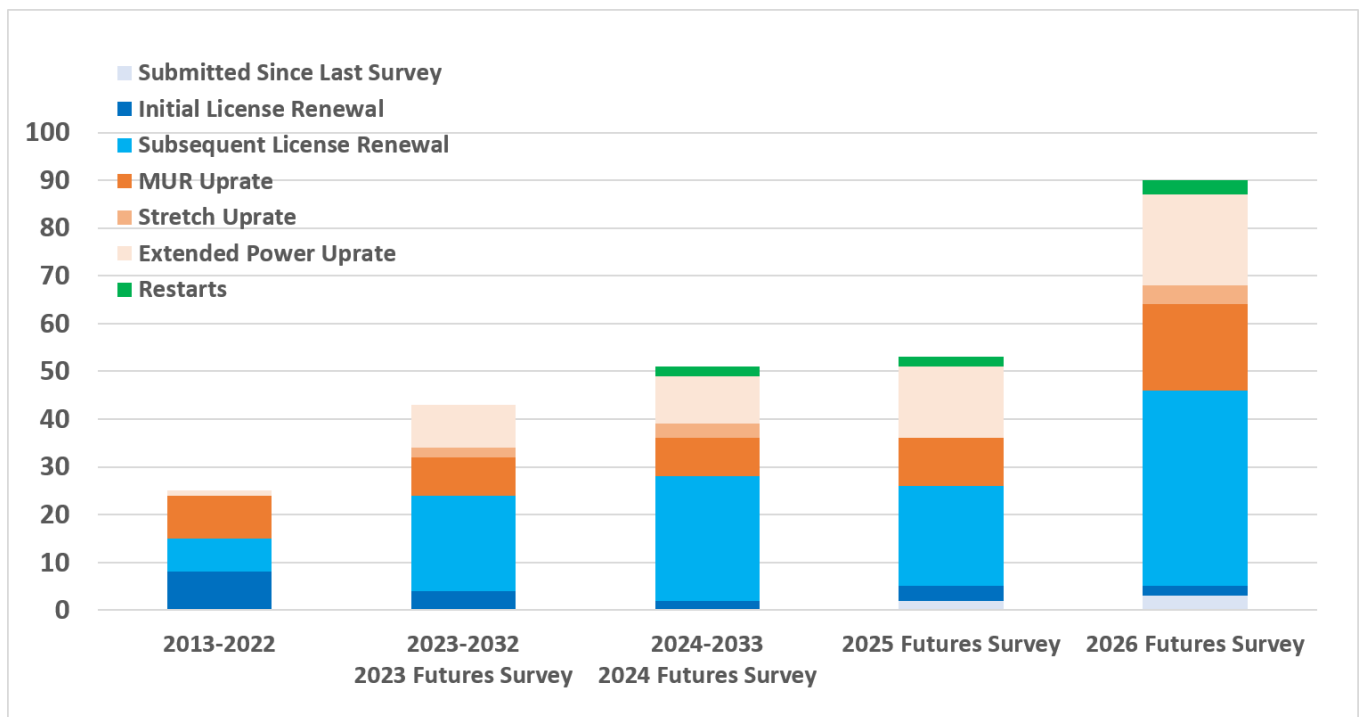
Since the last survey, restart of previously shutdown units continues and is a significant contributor to near-term generation additions. Palisades, Crane Energy Center (TMI 1) and Duane Arnold have made progress toward restart. Getting more output from the existing fleet is the most rapid and cost-effective method to add large scale nuclear electricity generation capacity. As shown below, this survey shows that a total of over 7 GWe of new capacity is planned to be added through power uprates, plant restarts, extension of refueling cycles, and other output increases.

Over 7 GWe of Additional Generation from the Existing Fleet



Many of these activities will require review and approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Based on the data received, understanding that these are not firm commitments, it represents a tremendous increase in the number of new applications being submitted to the NRC over the results from the 2025 survey with the submittal totals nearly an 80% increase.

New License Applications to NRC



The 2026 survey also updated information on plans and interest in new nuclear. The following key insights were gleaned:

- Seven companies surveyed indicated that their plans/expectations for advanced nuclear had increased

over the previous 12 months. No companies indicated a reduced level of interest.

- Over the next 14 years (through 2039), the survey shows planning for an additional 31 GWe in new nuclear generation. This is an increase over the 2025 survey.
- The members surveyed continue to see the need for greater than 100 GWe of new nuclear by the 2050s to support their generation and reliability needs. It is worth noting that the NEI member companies included in the survey are responsible for less than half of the total power generation in the U.S., so the total U.S. need for new nuclear is far greater than 100 GWe.
- The 2026 survey showed continued interest in early site permits (ESP), construction permits and combined operating licenses. Many are anticipated to be prepared by the end of this decade. Over a dozen ESPs (updated and new) are planned before the end of this decade.

Policy and Regulatory Developments

The results of this survey reflect more than growing electricity demand—they reflect a fundamental shift in the federal environment surrounding nuclear energy. Over the past two years, Congress, the Administration, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) have aligned around a common objective: enabling substantially greater deployment of nuclear energy while maintaining the highest standards of safety.

For much of the past two decades, uncertainty surrounding licensing schedules, regulatory costs, and project financing represented significant barriers to investment in both existing reactors and new nuclear generation. While challenges remain, many of those barriers are beginning to diminish.

The increased planning identified throughout this survey—including license renewals, power uprates, plant restarts, and new reactor projects—suggests that utilities are responding to a policy environment that is becoming increasingly supportive, predictable, and investment-oriented.

Policy Progress

Federal policy over the past year has increasingly focused on enabling deployment rather than simply supporting research and development.

The ADVANCE Act established the statutory framework for modernizing NRC licensing processes, encouraging greater use of risk-informed and technology-inclusive regulation, reducing licensing costs for advanced reactors, and creating new pathways for deployment at existing nuclear and retired fossil-fuel sites.

Building upon this foundation, the Administration's Executive Orders issued in 2025 established an ambitious national strategy to accelerate nuclear deployment. The Executive Orders directed coordinated federal action to reform NRC processes, expand domestic fuel capabilities, accelerate deployment through DOE and DOD, strengthen U.S. nuclear exports, modernize used fuel policy, and develop the workforce needed for long-term industry growth.

Congress has also continued to preserve federal tax incentives supporting both existing reactors and new nuclear projects, providing greater certainty for utilities making long-term investment decisions.

Collectively, these actions represent one of the most comprehensive federal efforts to expand nuclear energy in several decades.

Despite this progress, financing first-of-a-kind commercial deployments remains an important challenge. Additional federal mechanisms that reduce construction and financing risk could significantly accelerate

deployment of the first wave of large-scale advanced reactors.

Regulatory Progress

Policy changes alone cannot increase nuclear generation unless they translate into more efficient regulatory implementation.

During the past year, the NRC has demonstrated measurable progress toward improving the predictability, efficiency, and transparency of licensing activities.

Subsequent license renewal reviews now require substantially fewer review hours than earlier applications while maintaining rigorous safety oversight. Review schedules have become more predictable, and numerous licensing actions have been completed ahead of planned schedules.

The NRC has also established more aggressive review schedules for power uprates and other licensing activities needed to increase output from the existing fleet.

Perhaps the most significant structural change has been implementation of fixed fee caps for many licensing and pre-application activities. Combined with reduced hourly rates for qualifying advanced reactor work, these changes improve cost certainty for applicants while creating stronger incentives for efficient NRC reviews.

At the same time, the NRC has initiated a comprehensive review of decades of accumulated regulations, guidance, and internal processes. The objective is not to reduce safety standards, but to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burden, expand the use of modern risk-informed approaches, and focus agency resources on activities that provide the greatest safety benefit.

Outlook

The survey results indicate that the industry is preparing for a level of licensing activity not seen in decades. Planned license renewals, power uprates, plant restarts, early site permits, construction permits, and combined license applications all point toward a significant increase in NRC workload.

The policy and regulatory improvements made over the past two years have laid the foundation for this growth. The next challenge is successful implementation at scale. The ability of federal agencies to sustain predictable schedules, efficient reviews, and timely decision-making will play a major role in determining how much of the planned nuclear capacity identified in this survey ultimately becomes operational.

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Introduction

Demand for nuclear energy has surged over the past several years. Federal policies have leveled the playing field with other forms of low-carbon generation and the high reliability of nuclear has gained interest from customers seeking reliable power 24/7/365.

Load projections are suggesting significant growth in electricity demand due to a number of factors including expansion of data centers and artificial intelligence (AI) centers, growth from re-shoring of manufacturing, decarbonization efforts in non-electricity sectors, and electrification activities. In order to meet this demand, utilities need more clean, reliable power and nuclear is a preferred option. This demand has manifested itself in interest in extending and increasing production from the current fleet and in deployment of new nuclear.

Starting in early 2023, NEI began conducting surveys of its utility members to better understand the impact of changes in federal policy that have the potential to significantly increase the level of planning and activity for both operating reactors and new advanced reactors. The 2023 survey was conducted among nineteen NEI member companies with operating reactors and focused on significant planned plant enhancements being considered or actively planned over the next ten years. The goal was to gain an aggregate sense of industry activities underway or in planning to extend the life and performance of the current fleet of reactors and to provide insights into plans to extend the U.S. fleet of reactors. This aggregate information was helpful to the NRC and with policymakers in providing a more robust forecast of the industry's future.

The results of the 2023 survey showed strong interest and increasing activity in license renewal, power uprates, extending refueling cycles, and using clean firm nuclear energy for non-grid applications. In 2024 and 2025, NEI repeated the survey to provide an enhanced perspective on trending with time. The 2024/2025 surveys were conducted among NEI member companies with 94 operating reactors plus the Palisades plant that was progressing to restart and again, focused on significant planned plant enhancements being considered or actively planned.

The 2026 survey repeats the prior surveys and once again serves as a robust forecast of the industry's future. The 2026 survey was conducted among 21 NEI member companies with 94 operating reactors plus the Palisades plant.

All plant specific information collected as part of the survey is being maintained confidential by NEI. Only aggregate industry level results are being shared.

Survey Content

The survey was comprised of two parts: Part A – Significant Plant Enhancements and Part B – Advanced Nuclear Activities.

Part A – Significant Plant Enhancements

Part A covered and requested levels of interest and planning for plant activities that extend plant operation (License Renewal and Subsequent License Renewal). Part A also covered activities that increase licensed power through uprates (e.g., Measurement Uncertainty Recapture, Stretch Power Uprates, Extended Power Uprates) as well as changes to increase capacity such as fuel cycle extensions.

The survey requested information on interest/planning associated with plant changes that support increases in power or increases in capacity. These changes include transitions to Accident Tolerant Fuel and utilization of risk-

informed methodologies to revise design/accident parameters (Risk-informed LOCA).

One area of interest, spurred by recent federal legislation, is new load applications of nuclear generated electricity, such as data centers and hydrogen.

Finally, acknowledging that many of the changes being considered will require long-term capital investment, the survey requested information on major capital projects being considered or actively planned over the next 5 to 10 years.

Part B – Advanced Nuclear Activities

This survey asked how each company's plans/expectations have changed over the previous 12 months. To assess how views have changed, the survey requested information on the level of activity associated with the following activities:

- Estimated GWe of new nuclear per half-decade being considered in resource planning
- A breakdown of how this new nuclear capacity will be generated (e.g., Large Reactor (>400 MWe), SMRs (50-400 MWe), or Micro Reactors (<50 MWe)
- Interest in and timing for Early Site Permit(s)
- Interest in and timing for Construction Permit(s)
- Interest in and timing for Combined Operating License(s)

Survey Demographics

The survey was distributed to twenty-one NEI utility member companies. These companies operate ninety- four units at 55 sites and one company that is recommissioning a shutdown reactor at one site. Of the 95 units, 64 are PWRs and 31 are BWRs. Of the 56 sites, 23 operate in merchant markets and 33 operate in “cost of service” regulated markets.

Survey Results

Initial License Renewal

The Atomic Energy Act and NRC regulations limit commercial power reactor licenses to an initial 40 years but also permit such licenses to be renewed for an additional 20 years. The NRC has renewed licenses for ninety of the ninety-four currently operating reactor units.

Currently only four reactor units (two sites) are operating under their original 40-year license.

- Watts Bar Units 1 & 2
- Vogtle Units 3 & 4

By letters of intent, TVA notified NRC of their plans to submit license renewal application for Watts Bar Unit 1 in 2026. The original licenses for Watts Bar Unit 2, Vogtle Unit 3 and Vogtle Unit 4 will not expire until 2055, 2062 and 2063 respectively. As such there is no immediate need for TVA and Southern Nuclear to declare plans for these units.

Survey Takeaway

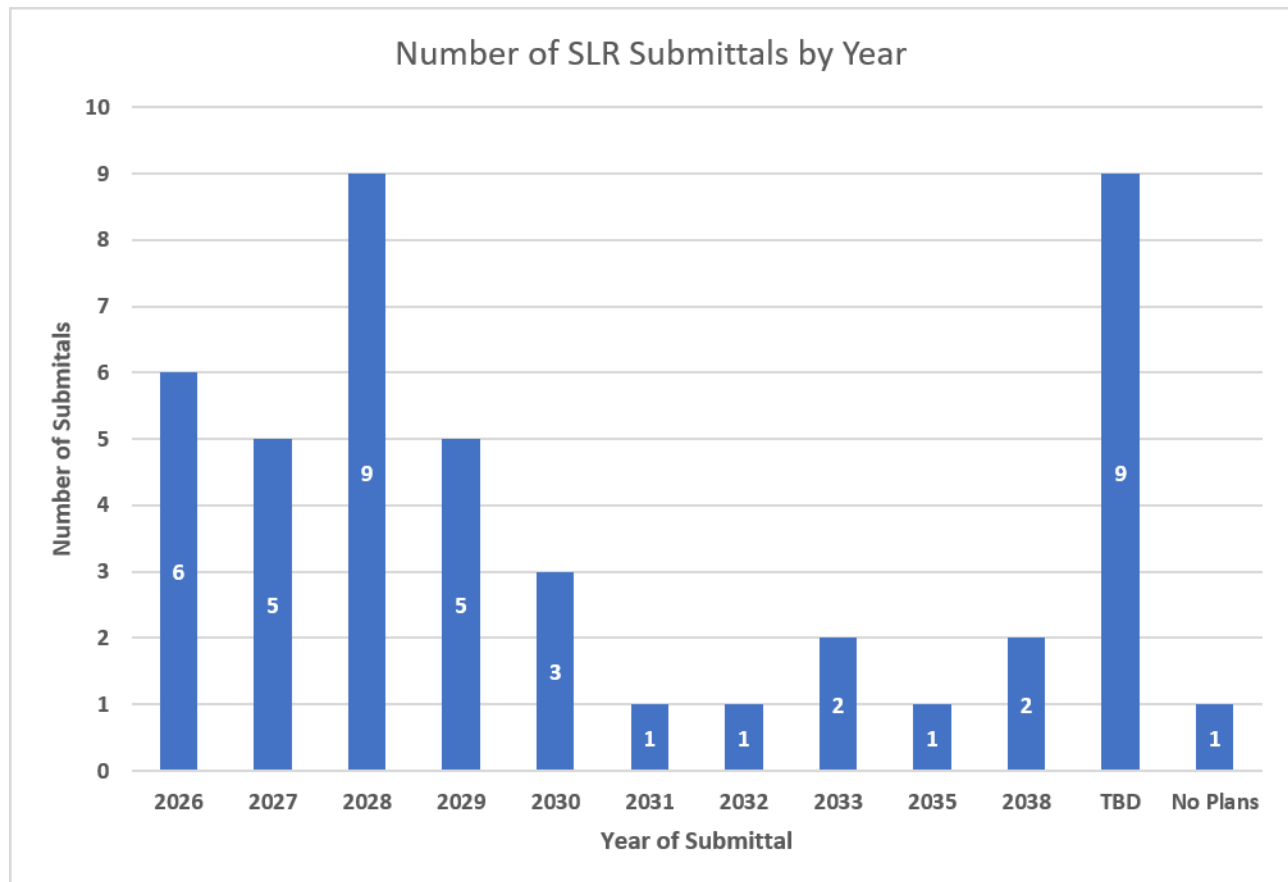
The survey results confirm that all 95 units included in the survey have either received approval of their original license renewal, submitted their license renewal application or are planning for license renewal as appropriate.

Subsequent License Renewal

Subsequent license renewal (SLR) is defined as an extension of the license to operate from 60 years to 80 years. As of the end of July 2026, SLR licenses have been issued for thirteen sites (25 units). Three applications (3 units) are currently under review.

Twenty-three sites have already publicly announced, through letters of intent to NRC, their plans and schedules for submitting SLR applications.

The results from the survey are consistent with the above and show significant plans beyond formal announcements. In total, all but one site responding to the survey expressed a level of planning for SLR. It should be noted that submittal years were provided for most sites. When a date was not known, these are tallied in a category labeled “TBD”. When a date range was provided, the earliest date was used.



Survey Takeaway

All sites but one anticipate receiving approval to operate to at least 80 years.

Power Uprates

Power uprates are generally classified in three categories:

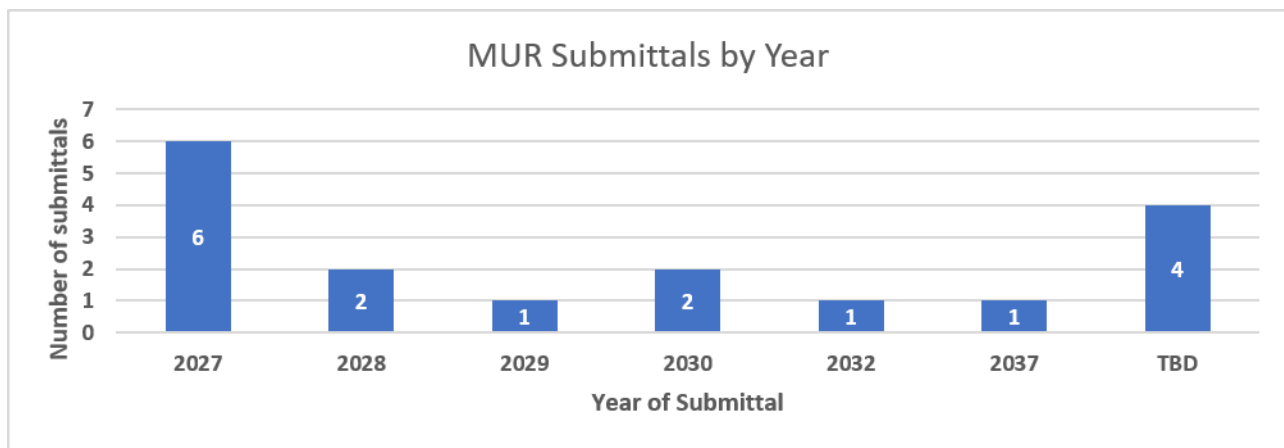
- **Measurement Uncertainty Recapture (MUR)** power uprates are less than 2 percent and are achieved through the implementation of improved techniques for calculating reactor power. This involves the use of measurement devices to measure feedwater flow more precisely, which is then used to calculate reactor power. More precise measurements reduce the degree of uncertainty in the power level.
- **Stretch Power Uprates (SPU)** are typically up to 7 percent. Stretch Power Uprates usually involve changes to instrumentation set-points but can also include plant modifications as well as changes to plant tests and procedures.
- **Extended Power Uprates (EPU)** are significant increases in power and have been approved for increases as high as 20 percent. These uprates require significant modifications to major balance-of-plant equipment such as high-pressure turbines, condensate pumps and motors, main generators, and/or transformers.

Measurement Uncertainty Recapture

Nuclear power plants are licensed to operate at a specified maximum core thermal power, often called rated thermal power (RTP). Regulations formerly required licensees to assume that the reactor has been operating continuously at a power level at least 1.02 times the licensed power level when conducting design basis analyses. This requirement was included to ensure that instrumentation uncertainties were adequately accounted for in the safety analyses. In 2000, the regulations were changed to allow licensees to use a power level less than 1.02 times the RTP for safety analyses based on the use of state-of-the-art feedwater (FW) flow measurement devices that provide a more accurate calculation of power. Licensees can use a lower uncertainty in the safety analyses, provided that the licensee has demonstrated that the proposed value adequately accounts for instrumentation uncertainties.

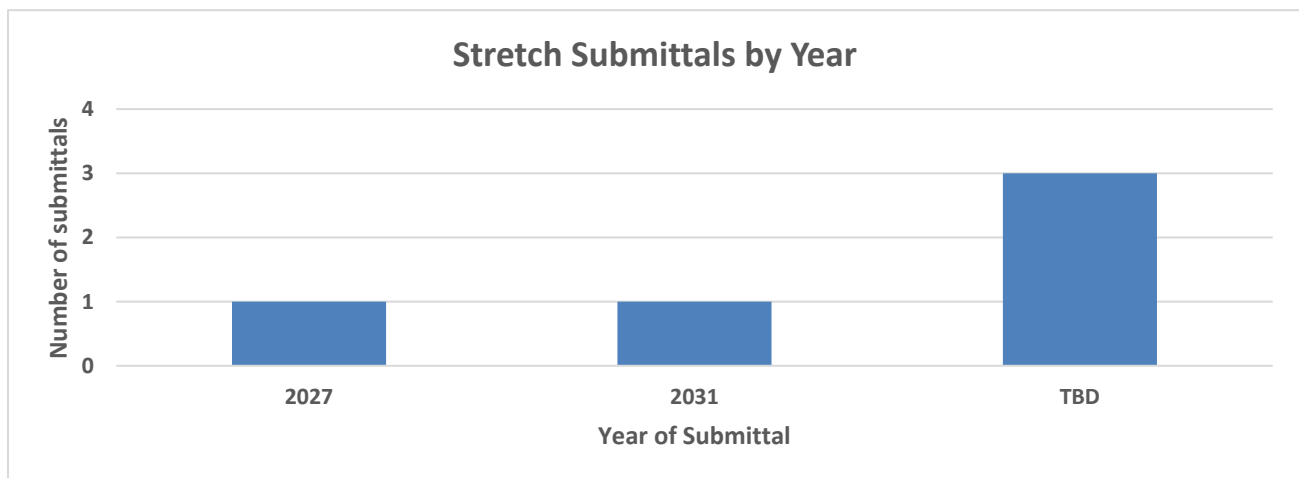
Since this regulation change became effective in 2000, the NRC has issued 50 safety evaluation reports approving plants to implement MUR power uprates for a total increase in power across the fleet of 3400 MWth. Improvements in methods and equipment have allowed some plants to receive approval for multiple MUR power uprates.

Seventeen sites identified varying levels of interest or planning to implement an MUR power uprate in the future. Of these 17 sites, six are merchant sites and eleven are regulated. Several of the 17 sites have already received an initial MUR uprate and are considering a second by taking advantage of improvements in methods (e.g., Data Validation and Reconciliation). No significant changes from 2025 survey results were noted in the 2026 planning for MUR power uprates.



Stretch Power Uprate

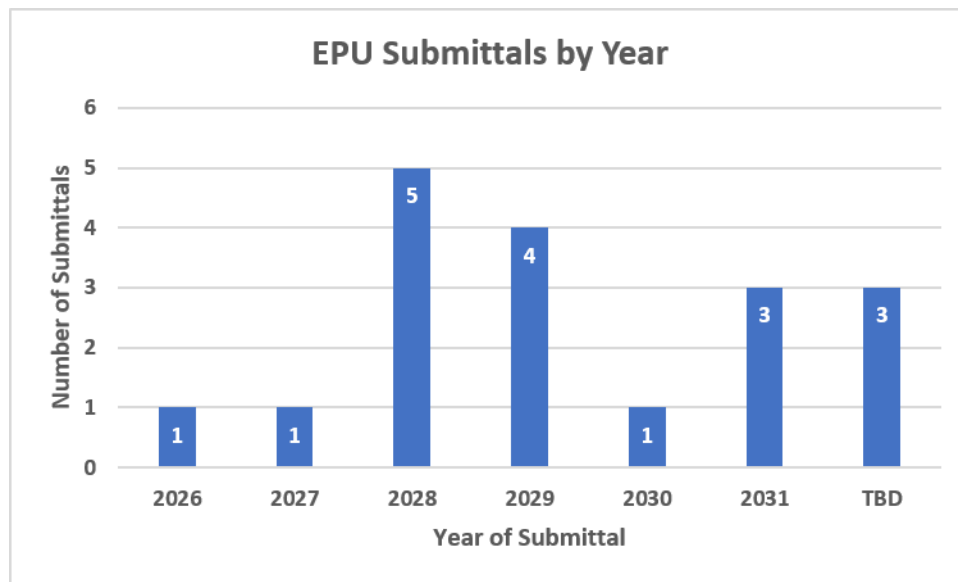
Since 1977, Stretch Power Uprate approvals have been issued to 65 units (39 sites). Some of these plants have received multiple SPU approvals and several sites have stopped operation and transitioned to decommissioning. Stretch Power Uprates are typically up to 7 percent and are within the design capacity of the plant. The actual value for percentage increase in power a plant can achieve while staying within the SPU category is plant-specific and depends on the operating margins included in the design of a particular plant. SPUs usually involve changes to instrumentation setpoints but do not involve major plant modifications. The survey identified five sites that are planning or considering SPUs. This is small increase over the 2025 survey where four sites identified interest or planning for an SPU.



Extended Power Uprate

Extended Power Uprates range from 6% to 20% increase in power and generally involve major modifications to plant equipment. These changes include modification or replacement of the main turbine, condensate pumps, feedwater pumps and main generator. Since 1998, 21 sites (34 units) have received approval for an Extended Power Uprate.

In response to the survey, eighteen sites indicated a level of interest/planning for an extended power uprate. This is a decrease from the twenty-one that identified interest/planning in 2025.



Other Power Upgrades

The survey provided an opportunity for companies to identify other power upgrade plans. These upgrades generally involve component replacements/upgrades such as feedwater heaters, moisture separators, steam dryers and high pressure turbines that increase the amount of electricity produced without changing the reactor output. Since the reactor is not impacted, NRC review is generally not required. In response to the survey, twenty sites identified plans for unspecified power upgrades, generally in the 1 to 3% range. This is an increase above the eighteen sites that identified plans in the 2025 survey.

Topic	Completed or No Current Interest	Varying Levels of Interest/Planning
Other Power Upgrades	36 sites	20 sites

Survey Takeaway

Eighty four percent of unit surveyed have a level of interest/planning for one or more power upgrades for their site units with a combined capacity greater than 5 GWe.

Enabling Changes

The survey requested information on several types of changes that have the potential to support increases in plant power or capacity. These changes are:

- Risk-Informed LOCA enabled
- Extended Fuel Cycle (without ATF)
- Extended Fuel Cycle (with ATF)

The first change does not directly result in an increase in power production or capacity, but instead enables power uprates and longer fuel cycles by enabling changes to operational and accident analysis design limits.

Risk-Informed LOCA Enabled

Accident tolerant fuels (ATF) have the potential to enhance safety at U.S. nuclear power plants by offering better performance during normal operation, transient conditions, and accident scenarios. Use of these advanced fuel designs in combination with increased fuel enrichments up to 10% (LEU+) has the potential to increase operational flexibility, achieve longer fuel cycles, and support power uprates.

The survey results demonstrate continued interest in implementing risk-informed LOCA changes, with 5 of the 56 sites expressing a level of interest.

Topic	Completed or No Current Interest	Varying Levels of Interest/Planning
RI-LOCA	51 sites	5 sites

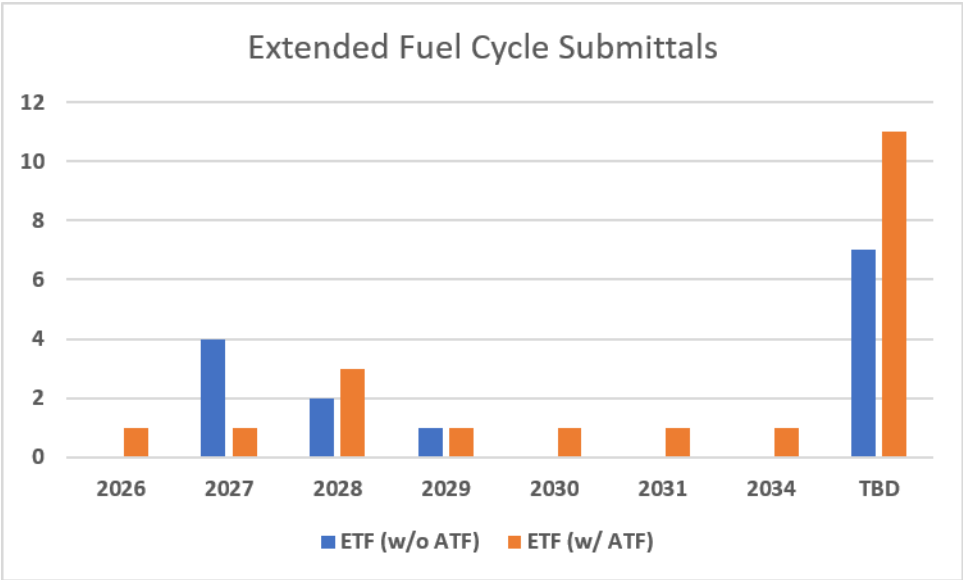
It should be noted that the NRC has not yet completed a comprehensive risk-informed LOCA rulemaking for the current light-water reactor fleet. However, the agency has made it clear that it intends to move in that direction, particularly as it addresses higher-enrichment fuel (HALEU), higher burnup, accident tolerant fuels (ATF), and modern risk-informed regulation. Interest in risk-informed LOCA activities is expected to increase once NRC/Industry efforts are completed.

Extended Fuel Cycle

An interest in extended fuel cycles (generally extending from 18-month to 24-month) was expressed by 34 of the 56 sites. This is an increase over 2025 survey results. Extended fuel cycles are enabled by redesign of the reactor core and its operation, enabling an increase in time interval between plant shutdowns for refueling. In some cases, this can be accomplished with available fuel designs. In other cases, deployment of new, accident tolerant fuel is required. In either case, extensive NRC review is required to ensure continued safe operations. This interest was expressed primarily by PWR sites, the majority of which are currently operating on 18-month fuel cycles.

Topic	Completed or No Current Interest	Varying Levels of Interest/Planning
EFC w/o ATF	22 sites	14 sites
EFC with ATF		20 sites

Timeline for Extended Fuel Cycles



Survey Takeaway

Forty-eight percent of sites in the survey have varying levels of interest/planning for one or more of the enabling changes identified in the survey. Deployment of these changes is generally targeted in the 2026 – 2034 timeframe.

New Load Applications

The survey requested information on interest in new “behind the meter” load applications, including Hydrogen and data centers. Nuclear power is recognized as a clean and highly reliable source of electricity, prized as a power source for data centers. Hydrogen generation has also received some interest. However, recent legislation phases out the hydrogen tax credit in 2028, dampening interest in new hydrogen projects.

Hydrogen

Nuclear power plants can supply the required heat and electricity to produce hydrogen without generating any carbon emissions. In response to the survey, zero sites expressed interest/planning in hydrogen generation. This is a reduction from the 2025 survey where three sites expressed interest/planning and from the 2024 survey where twelve sites identified interest/planning.

Topic	No Current Interest	Varying Levels of Interest/Planning
Hydrogen	56 sites	0 sites

Data Centers

The nuclear industry is seeing growing interest in supplying reliable, around-the-clock electricity to data centers through a variety of commercial arrangements. The results provide a snapshot of industry activity and illustrate the breadth of interest across the operating fleet.

Topic	No Current Interest	Varying Levels of Interest/Planning
Data Centers	43 sites	13 sites

Other

No sites identified interest in new load applications other than data centers and hydrogen generation.

Survey Takeaway

The survey demonstrated continued interest/planning for new load applications of nuclear power, primarily data centers, with 23% of sites considering data centers.

New Nuclear

The second part of the 2026 survey focused on interests in new nuclear, specifically how attitudes toward nuclear have evolved, licensing activities each company have planned and anticipated timing for bringing new nuclear capacity online.

Change in Attitude toward New Nuclear

In the 2026 survey, we asked two questions on utility attitudes toward new nuclear:

- Have Company plans/expectations for Advanced Nuclear expanded over the previous 12 months? (Y/N)
- Have Company plans/expectations for Advanced Nuclear decreased over the previous 12 months? (Y/N)

Of the twenty-one companies, seven companies responded that their plans/expectations have expanded over the previous 12 months. Zero companies identified that their plans/expectations have decreased over the previous 12 months.

	Y	N	No Response
Plans/expectations Expanded	7	4	10
Plans/expectations Decreased	0	10	11

New Generation Licensing

To obtain a better sense of company activity associated with new nuclear, companies were asked for their estimated submittal schedule for a series of new nuclear licensing topics. These were:

- New Early Site Permit(s)
- Update of Previously Approved Early Site Permit
- Construction Permit(s)
- New Combined Operating License(s) (COLs)
- Update of Previously Approved Combined Operating License

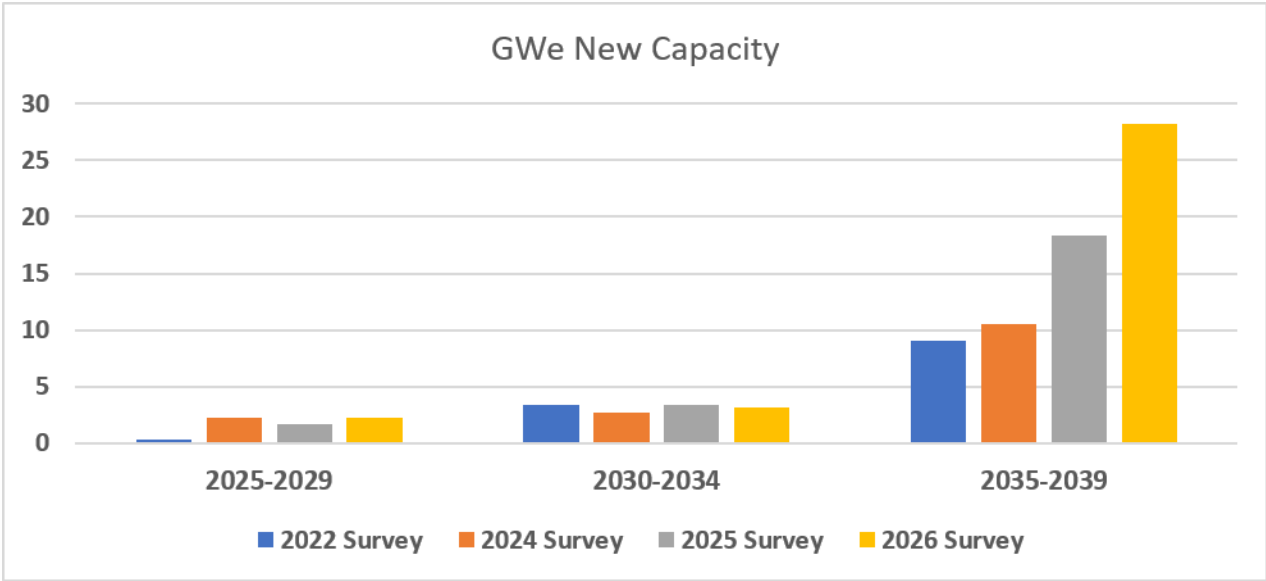
The survey results show significant interest in Early Site Permits, Construction Permits and Combined Operating Licenses over the next ten years; with approximately 15 ESPs, 8 Construction Permits and 30 Combined Operating Licenses.

Number of NRC Submittals

	2025-2029	2030-2034	2035-2039	Total
New ESP	7	2	2	11
Update ESP	4	0	0	4
Construction Permit	4	4	0	8
New COL	7	9	11	27
Update COL	2	1	0	3

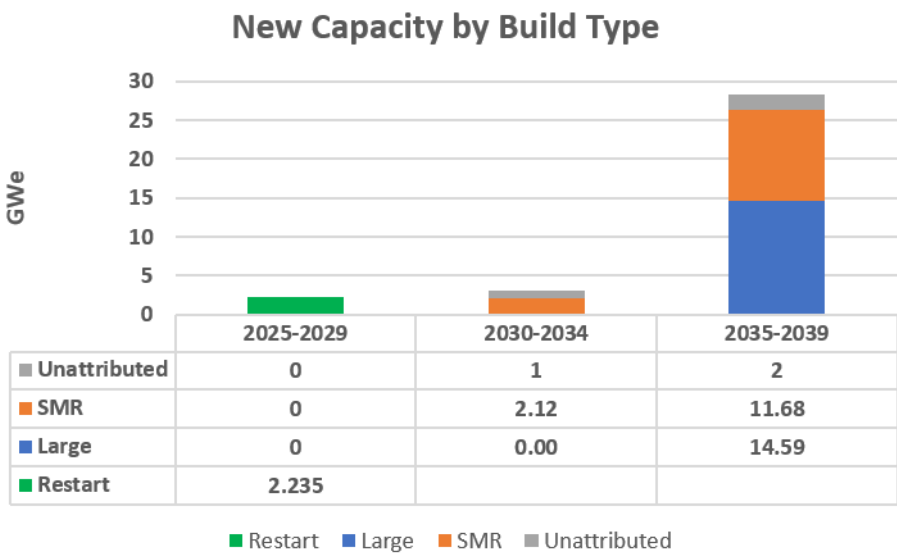
New Generation

The 21 companies that responded to the Part B survey identified planning for 33.6 GWe in new generation over the next 15 years. Most of this generation planned in the 2035-2039 timeframe.



In the 2026 survey, there was generally an even split between new capacity from SMRs and new capacity from Large Reactors. The survey included planned restarts of three shutdown reactors. No micro reactor plans were identified.

Looking at the next 15 years (through 2039), the survey shows planning for an additional 33.6 GWe in new nuclear generation. This is a 44% increase over the 2025 survey and nearly doubles the 2024 survey. This reflects the growing role that new nuclear plays in utility plans for the 2030s. Further, the demand in the second half of the 2030s has grown to 28 GWe, equivalent to a nearly 6 GWe per year deployment rate.



Survey Takeaway

There is an increased level of interest in new nuclear with 70% of utilities responding to the survey expressing interest or action on one or more regulatory pathways (e.g., ESP, CP, COL).

Policy and Regulatory Developments

Effective policy and efficient regulatory processes are essential to translating growing interest in nuclear power into actions that sustain and expand nuclear generation. Over the past year, federal policymakers and regulators have continued to make nuclear energy a national priority. Significant legislative, executive, and regulatory actions have improved the outlook for both operating reactors and new nuclear deployment, although successful implementation remains critical.

Policy Progress

The ADVANCE Act, enacted in 2024, continues to drive modernization of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Throughout 2025 and 2026, the NRC has implemented numerous provisions of the Act intended to improve regulatory efficiency while maintaining the agency's longstanding commitment to safety. These efforts include:

- Reduced licensing costs for qualifying advanced reactor applications through lower hourly review fees.
- Development of accelerated licensing pathways for microreactors and reactors at existing nuclear and retired fossil-fuel sites.
- Continued implementation of prizes and incentives supporting deployment of advanced nuclear technologies.
- Expansion of risk-informed and performance-based licensing approaches.

In 2025, President Trump issued four Executive Orders establishing an Administration-wide initiative to accelerate nuclear deployment. These Executive Orders directed federal agencies to improve licensing efficiency, strengthen domestic fuel capabilities, expand deployment opportunities through the Department of Energy and Department of Defense, modernize used fuel policy, promote U.S. nuclear exports, and support workforce development.

Implementation of these Executive Orders continued throughout 2026. The NRC initiated an agency-wide review of regulations and guidance to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burden while preserving safety, DOE expanded efforts to support deployment of advanced reactors and fuel supply, and federal agencies increased coordination to accelerate project development.

Congress also enacted legislation extending and preserving key federal tax incentives for nuclear generation, providing greater certainty for investment decisions involving both existing reactors and new nuclear projects.

Regulatory Progress

The regulatory environment has improved substantially over the past year. Driven by both the ADVANCE Act and Executive Branch initiatives, the NRC has placed greater emphasis on predictable schedules, efficient reviews, and disciplined project management.

License renewal reviews continue to demonstrate significant improvements in efficiency, with substantially fewer review hours and consistently shorter review schedules than historical averages. The NRC has also established standard review schedules for many licensing actions that are measured in months rather than years.

Perhaps most significantly, the NRC has begun implementing fixed fee caps for many licensing and pre-application activities. These caps provide applicants with greater cost certainty while creating additional incentives for efficient and timely NRC reviews.

The NRC has also expanded the use of risk-informed, technology-inclusive regulatory approaches and continues its comprehensive review of regulations, guidance, and internal processes to eliminate unnecessary requirements while maintaining strong safety oversight.

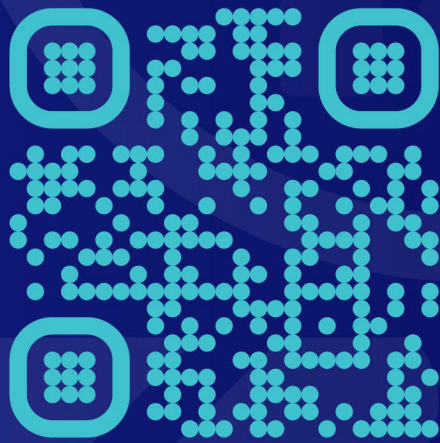
These improvements are occurring at a critical time. Growing electricity demand—driven by electrification, domestic manufacturing, artificial intelligence, and data centers—is increasing interest in both power uprates at existing reactors and deployment of new nuclear generating capacity. As reflected throughout this survey, the volume of anticipated licensing activity could increase significantly over the next decade. Maintaining recent gains in regulatory efficiency while successfully managing this growing workload will be essential to enabling the expansion of nuclear energy in the United States.

Conclusions

Keeping in mind that any survey only presents a snapshot in time, the 2026 survey, when compared to the 2025 survey, clearly demonstrates a steady and growing demand for nuclear power in the U.S. and shows the actions and planning by U.S. nuclear power companies to meet this demand. Some of the key takeaways from this survey include:

- Strong interest in extending life and investing in expanding output
 - More & larger power uprates planned, sooner
 - Planned capital investments increased
- Increased interest in extending refueling cycles
 - Most are dependent on ATF
- Potential capacity increase from existing fleet could exceed 7 GWe
- Utility interest in Behind-the-Meter (BTM) appears to have waned
 - Little current interest in hydrogen
 - Fewer interested in BTM data centers
- Net increase in new nuclear
 - Total GWe expected by 2039 has increased 33% since last year
- Interest in new nuclear is sharply up with twenty-four permitting submittal by the end of this decade.

This progress is predicated on the policies that level the playing field for nuclear power and address the financing challenges of grid-scale first of a kind deployments.



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