



NRC NEWS

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November 20, 2024

NRC To Issue Construction Permits for Kairos Hermes 2 Test Facility in Tennessee

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has directed the staff to issue construction permits to Kairos Power for the company's proposed Hermes 2 non-power test reactor facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The permits authorize Kairos to build a facility with two 35-megawatt thermal test reactors that would use molten salt to cool the reactor cores.

“While keeping safety at the forefront, the permitting process was quite efficient, and we issued these permits in less than 18 months,” said NRC Chair Christopher Hanson. “This shows we can rapidly apply relevant conclusions from earlier reviews to promptly reach decisions on new reactors.”

Following a new, streamlined mandatory hearing process conducted via written documents, the Commission [authorized](#) the agency's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation to issue the permits, having found the staff's review of the Hermes 2 application adequate to make the necessary regulatory safety and environmental findings. The staff expects to issue the permits in the near future.

The Hermes 2 facility would include the two reactors and a shared power generation system. The facility is intended to provide operational data to support the development of a larger version for commercial electricity production. The NRC would need to review and approve a future application from Kairos before operating licenses for the Hermes 2 facility could be issued.

Kairos submitted its application to build Hermes 2 in July 2023. The NRC issued its [final safety evaluation](#) for the permits on July 19, 2024, and the [final environmental assessment](#) for the site on Aug. 30, 2024.