

An NRC task force seems to be heading for some significant policy shifts in light of the Fukushima reactor failures, including tighter requirements for re-licensing and reduced reliance on voluntary guidelines. The two commissioners on the task force seem to be reassessing the Commission's previously nonchalant attitude toward extreme events. [ClimateWire](#) reports:

NRC policy has not considered the risk that a natural disaster could cause an extended loss of outside electric power from the grid, and also backup power within a plant, shutting down cooling systems that prevent core melting or exposure of spent fuel in storage pools, said Miller. He is a senior NRC official who delayed his retirement to head the short-term review of the Fukushima accident.

Extreme threats were considered so remote that they were covered by voluntary "severe accident management guidelines" (SAMGs) to plant operators, Miller noted. But NRC inspections since the Fukushima disaster in March revealed failures at some U.S. plants to keep the emergency guidelines and operators' training up-to-date.

Worst-case scenarios are easy to ignore as too unlikely to bother with. But that has a way of coming back to haunt you.