

NRA: fuel reprocessors must meet safety standards

The head of Japan's nuclear regulatory body says all nuclear facilities, not only power plants, must meet new safety standards to begin operation.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority plans to draw up new safety standards for nuclear power plants by July and screen applications from power companies to restart such plants.

Authority Chairman Shunichi Tanaka said on Wednesday that other nuclear facilities, such as spent-fuel reprocessing plants and test reactors, must also meet new safety standards, to be drawn up by December.



Tanaka added that his panel will investigate underground areas of the Shimokita Peninsula. The area in northern Japan has long been a focus of debate over the safety of its faults.

He stressed the need to survey the entire peninsula, where a reprocessing plant and a nuclear plant are located and another nuclear plant is under construction.

The reprocessing plant's operator, Japan Nuclear Fuel, plans to end test runs of the facility by October before starting full-scale operation.

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