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NUCLEAR MYTH QUIZ:
*How many times can a
U.S. Power Plant
renew its license?*

a) Once

b) Twice

c) Unlimited, if it applies and passes

d) Never



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ANSWER:

*How many times can a
U.S. Power Plant
renew its license?*

*c) A power plant can renew
its license as many times as
it applies and passes^{*}, per
nuclear regulations.*

* U.S. NRC (2018, October) "Backgrounder on Reactor License Renewal"





FAST FACTS ABOUT NUCLEAR:

Nuclear Power Plant License Renewals in the U.S.

As part of [NRC regulations](#), nuclear power plants must have an operating license to produce power in the United States. Originally, these licenses allowed nuclear plants to operate for 40 years – [not because of any limitation of the technology itself, but to provide consumers with anti-trust protections](#). However, with the bulk of nuclear power plants coming online between [1967 and 1990](#), the majority of nuclear power plants have either reached or are about to reach this 40 year limit. To prevent closure due to license expiration, 94 plants have been granted an Initial License Renewal as of October 2018; this NRC license renewal allows plants to extend their operations for an additional 20 years, upon proving they can [operate safely and efficiently during that time](#).

These Initial License Renewals allow the plants to run into [2029 and beyond](#), but many plants are looking towards the future, past their original renewals. Half of the U.S. Nuclear Fleet [will reach 60 years by 2040](#); with nuclear currently providing [55% of America's clean energy](#) and displacing an estimated [600 million tons of carbon per year](#), plants are applying for [Subsequent License Renewals](#), which would extend plant life by another 20 years. Surry, Turkey Point, and Peach Bottom [have already applied for a subsequent renewal](#), with North Anna and Oconee expected to apply within the next 2 years. As the industry advances, we may even see another license renewal cycle after this one, as the [regulations don't specify the number of times a plant can renew its license](#), so long as it proves it is operating safely.