The reactor meant to showcase nuclear’s comeback keeps hitting problems

US regulators have issued a warning to a nuclear project critical to Donald Trump’s efforts to revive the industry, after a contractor fell into a reactor cavity and a bundle of fuel rods nearly tipped over during refueling.

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission told Holtec International, a company racing to reopen a shuttered reactor at the Palisades nuclear power plant in Michigan, to address a “chilled work environment” that has made staff hesitant to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation.

The warning has prompted concerns among critics that financial and political pressures to revitalize nuclear power as an answer to booming AI-driven energy demand are increasing risks of accidents.

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/safety-concerns-cloud-americas-flagship-nuclear-restart/

Comcast loses more customers,

claims other ISPs’ cheap prices are “irrational”

Comcast reportedly plans significant job cuts in its cable division as the firm continues to lose residential broadband and TV customers. Comcast lost 144,000 residential broadband customers in Q3 2026, up from a 91,000-customer loss in the same quarter a year ago, the company said in its earnings report today.

Comcast historically capitalized on a lack of competition for high-speed wired broadband. But now it faces stronger competition from fixed wireless providers and from fiber providers in parts of its cable territory.

“Fixed wireless remains aggressive and continues to take share, while fiber construction remains elevated, with pockets of irrational pricing and promotional activity,” Comcast co-CEO Mike Cavanagh said today in an earnings call.

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/comcast-loses-more-customers-claims-other-isps-cheap-prices-are-irrational/

FCC chair warns media not to run the “fake polls” Trump

keeps complaining about

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr today warned broadcasters about airing “fake polls,” amplifying one of the many complaints that President Trump has regularly made about the news media.

Carr’s post on X said, “Many journalists and broadcasters have been amplifying or airing these Polls without regard to basic journalistic ethics and without informing the public that those Polls lack a scientific, accurate, or even real basis… Broadcasters are advised to avoid engaging in News Distortions or running Broadcast Hoaxes by airing Polls that would violate their regulatory obligations.”

Carr urged broadcasters to “provide their viewers with additional context and information about Polls they have covered.” In fact, one small polling outfit was exposed as a hoax this week, and a similar incident occurred in August. News outlets have reported on these hoaxes, providing the very “context” that Carr said is needed.

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/fcc-chair-warns-media-not-to-run-the-fake-polls-trump-keeps-complaining-about/

Report: Musk ordered Starlink

slowdown in Ukraine, then blamed it on Trump

A Wall Street Journal report said SpaceX CEO Elon Musk ordered the Starlink throttling that blindsided Ukraine's air assault forces last week, despite Musk's claim that all decisions on the military version of Starlink are made by the US military and President Trump.

Trump denied ordering the restrictions. While Musk may have spoken to Trump and administration officials before the decision, The Wall Street Journal reported yesterday that Musk made the final call. The decision came after both Musk and Trump criticized Ukraine for attacking Russian diesel refineries.

"Elon Musk ordered the slowdown of a military-grade version of Starlink relied on by Ukraine, a decision that sparked panic in Kyiv and confusion inside the Trump administration," the WSJ wrote, citing unnamed US officials and people familiar with the matter. The report said that "Musk capped the speeds at which Ukrainian hardware could stay connected to the satellite-based network… rendering some offensive drones and interceptor drones virtually useless."

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/report-says-musk-not-trump-ordered-starlink-throttling-that-blindsided-ukraine/

Judge rejects Trump’s wild claim EPA can dismiss data center pollution lawsuits

Elon Musk’s SpaceXAI is stuck facing a lawsuit over alleged data center pollution after Donald Trump failed to convince a judge that his Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has complete control over all Clean Air Act lawsuits and can dismiss any suit at whim.

Soon after unpermitted gas turbines were discovered powering Musk’s giant Colossus data center in Memphis, Tennessee, the NAACP sued. Its lawsuit sought an injunction requiring xAI (which, following a merger, is known now as SpaceXAI) to use the best available pollution control technology when operating the turbines and ordering penalties up to $124,426 per day per violation. Without such remedies, the turbines risked drastically spiking pollution in already vulnerable neighborhoods housing predominantly Black communities nearby, the NAACP argued.

To block the lawsuit, Trump tried to intervene, arguing that the EPA had the power to unilaterally dismiss lawsuits any time the president decides against enforcing the Clean Air Act. According to Trump, it would supposedly “not serve the public interest” if citizens were allowed to seek massive civil penalties to punish polluting AI firms that were trying to get data centers operational as fast as possible to support Trump’s AI Action Plan.

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/judge-rejects-trumps-wild-claim-epa-can-dismiss-data-center-pollution-lawsuits/

Meta drops the word “train” from its commercial TOS after AI backlash

Hoping to quell criticism, Meta has dropped the word “train” from its “streamlined” commercial terms of service that kick in on October 30.

Last week, Meta faced backlash after legal experts warned that the tech giant’s sweeping new commercial terms of service seemed to give Meta permission to endlessly scrape websites linked on business pages. Talking to Nieman Lab, experts suggested that Meta could possibly use the policy to avoid millions in licensing fees from news organizations by requiring all business users to share a wealth of AI training data simply for running a business page.

A Meta spokesperson confirmed that Meta did not alert users to the changed language following backlash. This potentially only adds to confusion ahead of the policy rollout. In response to backlash, Meta’s spokesperson provided a statement to Ars, acknowledging Nieman Lab’s initial report but not its follow-up report reiterating experts’ concerns:

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/meta-drops-the-word-train-from-its-commercial-tos-after-ai-backlash/

TP-Link tries to appease Trump admin with pledge to assemble routers in US

TP-Link yesterday announced plans to assemble Wi-Fi routers in the US, as the company attempts to get the Trump administration’s approval to sell its newest routers to American consumers.

The timing is uncertain, as TP-Link’s press release said it expects US-based assembly to begin “as early as” 2027. TP-Link’s application to sell new routers in the US could be rejected by the Trump administration or remain pending long enough to push the US-based assembly to 2028.

“Pending US regulatory approval, TP-Link expects domestic assembly of its groundbreaking Wi-Fi 8 home networking product line to begin as early as next year,” the company said. TP-Link said it signed a Letter of Intent with US company Keytronic, which agreed “to become a primary domestic manufacturing partner for TP-Link, supporting assembly of the company’s advanced networking portfolio in Corinth, Mississippi.”

Read full article

Comments

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/tp-link-tries-to-appease-trump-admin-with-pledge-to-assemble-routers-in-us/

“thegentlemanpervert” producing AI CSAM is a NJ prosecutor, say cops

Fitzgerald’s is a rare case where an official employed by the state’s top law enforcement and legal office has been accused of making and distributing AI CSAM, although some cops have been arrested for the crime. Earlier this year, a Pennsylvania cop was arrested for making AI porn from photos on driver’s licenses, and more recently in Korea, a police officer was arrested for making AI porn, including CSAM, The Korea Times reported.

In New Jersey, the deputy attorney general has been charged with possession of CSAM, dissemination of photos or film of CSAM, and “criminal use of a communication facility,” detectives said.

According to his LinkedIn, Fitzgerald had served as deputy attorney general since 2016, preparing insurance fraud and insurance licensee cases for trial as a state prosecutor. New Jersey’s district attorney, Joe Khan, said in a statement that New Jersey is aligned with the DOJ in viewing AI CSAM as being as harmful as CSAM.

“No one is above the law, least of all someone entrusted with upholding it,” Khan said. “Our office will pursue these cases aggressively and hold offenders fully accountable, regardless of their profession or title.”

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/thegentlemanpervert-producing-ai-csam-is-a-nj-prosecutor-say-cops/

Meta may use sweeping new commercial TOS to avoid millions in AI licensing fees

Legal experts are sounding alarms that Meta will soon update its commercial terms to require business accounts to allow Meta to train AI on their linked website content, not just their social media posts.

Kicking in on October 30, the TOS update won't allow businesses to opt out, instead suggesting that businesses stop using Meta services if they won't agree to let Meta bots freely crawl their linked content.

As Nieman Lab reported Thursday, this will affect all business accounts but is particularly shocking for news publishers who could perhaps charge Meta millions in licensing fees to continually access their articles for AI training. Currently news organizations are fighting a battle with OpenAI over whether such training without licensing is fair use, and Meta's terms seemingly risk granting it sweeping permissions, no matter which way the court leans.

"While journalism isn't the only industry that will be affected by this update, virtually every news organization has at least one Meta business account, including Nieman Lab," the

lab said.

Specifically, the updated terms say:

> *You authorize us (or any entity acting on our behalf) to use automated software (such as web scrapers, bots, robots, spiders, crawlers, and user agents) and create test credentials to access, index, cache, analyze, collect, retrieve, or crawl the domains, web pages, or URLs (and any content available through them) that are associated with your products or services, or that are made available through your or users' use of Meta Company Products and services, and to periodically pull updates from such domains, web pages, or URLs. Meta may use any content from such domains, web pages, or URLs to provide, develop, improve, research, train, and maintain the integrity of, the Meta Company Products, services, and features provided under these Commercial Terms and any other applicable supplemental terms.*

Notably, there is no mention of AI, but it's inferred from a single use of the word "train" and references to automated scraping and crawling.

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/meta-may-use-sweeping-new-commercial-tos-to-avoid-millions-in-ai-licensing-fees/

Polymarket saw $600 million in election trades after the elections were over

When asked about these markets, Shana Bautista, Polymarket's head of global intelligence and investigations, told WIRED that the team "immediately flagged this activity, investigated, and blocked the accounts from trading." Polymarket did not respond to follow-up questions about why the accounts were able to trade such a high amount of volume before it took action.

The timing of these trades made things even weirder. Polymarket's rules stipulated that the Ethiopia market would be resolved in October after the prime minister was formally appointed and sworn in, which meant that it stayed open for several months after Ahmed's victory was all but a foregone conclusion. For 123 days after the election, bursts of seemingly irrational trading continued, prompting Polymarket users to leave comments like "THIS NOT RESOLVED?" and "fuckkkk."

Sethi calls the phenomenon a "zombie market," where people can buy and trade on events that have already taken place or are no longer happening.

Another market about a 2024 election in Romania facilitated what Sethi described as "even more dramatic" trading anomalies. The initial election was called off due to fears about foreign interference. A new race was held several months later, but instead of closing the original market in the meantime, Polymarket kept it running alongside the new option.

It was during this period that Sethi first noticed something weird appeared to be happening with the older market. An algorithm Sethi and his colleagues created to flag potential wash trading on Polymarket identified nearly all of the volume as suspicious. "99.6 percent of volume in this market for certain weeks has been wash trading," Sethi says.

Wash trading is a type of market manipulation in which accounts repeatedly buy and sell assets to create the illusion of heavy trading activity, when in reality, money is simply moving back and forth. It’s banned on regulated financial exchanges in the United States and is specifically prohibited in Polymarket’s terms of service. An earlier study conducted by Sethi and colleagues found evidence of widespread wash trading on Polymarket’s offshore platform.

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/polymarket-saw-600-million-in-election-trades-after-the-elections-were-over/