

# Trump Just Fired the Scientists in Charge of Maintaining Our Nuclear Weapons

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President-elect Donald Trump's latest move regarding the United States' nuclear arsenal is likely to stoke fears both at home and abroad.

Gizmodo reported Monday afternoon that the Trump transition team has [apparently fired](#) the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) head and deputy chief, effective immediately. The NNSA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) that "maintains and enhances the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile." Citing an unnamed source within the DOE, Gizmodo reported [it could be well into the spring or summer](#) when the U.S. has a nuclear weapons chief again:

Trump has ordered Under Secretary for Nuclear Security Frank Klotz and his deputy, Madelyn Creedon—both Obama appointees—to leave their posts, even if it means no one is in charge of maintaining the country's nuclear weapons. According to our Energy Department source, Trump's team has yet to nominate anyone to succeed them. Since both positions require Senate confirmation, it could be months before their chairs are filled. And the vacancies may extend beyond the leadership roles.

While the Trump administration is expected to hire an estimated 4,000 people to work in the executive branch, and while political appointees of a previous administration traditionally resign from their positions at 12 PM on Inauguration Day (January 20), the NNSA is one of a select few federal agencies whose staff traditionally remains after previous appointees have left, given the world-ending capability of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, which is said to be up to [7,700 warheads](#) strong. President Obama kept George W. Bush's NNSA chief into his second term.

January 20 will mark the first time in the NNSA's history that the agency has been without a head. President-elect Trump has so far not said who he would appoint to replace the two NNSA officials.

"I'm more and more coming around to the idea that we're so very very fucked," Gizmodo's source [said](#).

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