



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

611 Ryan Plaza Drive - Suite 400
Arlington TX 76011-8064

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CONTACT: Breck Henderson

Phone: 817-860-8128

Cellular: 817-917-1227

e-mail: bwh@nrc.gov

NRC TO DISCUSS SAFETY PERFORMANCE AT SIEMENS POWER CORP. IN PUBLIC MEETING

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission will meet publically with Siemens Power Corp. to discuss its recent Licensee Performance Review of the company's nuclear fuel fabrication facility, known as the Richland Engineering and Manufacturing Facility.

The meeting will begin at 8:15 a.m. Tuesday, May 23, in the Siemens Power Corp. administrative building, conference room #5, at 2101 Horn Rapids Rd., Richland, Washington. The meeting is open to public observation. NRC officials will be available to answer questions afterward.

The performance review covers the period from January 1, 1998, through January 1 this year. "Our review indicated that Siemens has continued to exhibit a good level of performance with attention to safety," said Ellis W. Merschoff, NRC Regional Administrator in a letter to the company.

"The design and material condition of the new dry conversion process was considered a strength and has had a positive impact on the control of chemical safety hazards. The significant challenge with processing of lagoon wastes and hazardous wastes noted during the last performance review was now considered a strength with waste processing progressing well to reduce the amount of wastes stored on the site," Mr. Merschoff said.

Mr. Merschoff also noted that some areas at the plant need improvement, including effective implementation of criticality safety controls, compliance with administrative and procedural controls, the control of preventive maintenance for fire protection systems and equipment, and management oversight and implementation of transportation operations.

"Based upon our assessment of your performance, we will maintain the core inspection effort with emphasis on the plant fire protection program, implementation of criticality safety controls, and follow-up and review of corrective actions to improve transportation [operations]," Mr. Merschoff concluded.

The NRC's Performance Review will be available on the NRC's web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/reports> and from the Region IV Office of Public Affairs.

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