



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SCHEDULES MEETINGS TO DISCUSS 2004 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR POINT BEACH PLANT, LICENSE RENEWAL INSPECTION RESULTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Nuclear Management Company on Tuesday, April 19, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for the past year at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located near Two Rivers, Wis.

A second meeting will discuss the results of NRC inspections which are part of its review of the Point Beach plant's application for renewal of its operating license for an additional 20 years.

Both meetings will be held at the Two Creeks Town Hall, 5128 East Tapawingo Road (Corner of Highway 42 and Tapawingo Road), Two Creeks, Wis.

The meeting to discuss the results of the NRC license renewal inspections will begin at 5 p.m., and the performance assessment meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. Both meetings are open to public observation. Before each meeting is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public.

"While the Point Beach plant continues to operate safely, it has been under heightened NRC scrutiny since 2003 as a result of significant safety issues with a backup cooling system," said James Caldwell, NRC Regional Administrator. "This increased regulatory attention will continue until the agency has concluded that the Point Beach plant has demonstrated improved performance in broad areas of plant activities."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/poin_2004q4.pdf

Nuclear Management Company has developed a performance improvement program, and the NRC continues to monitor its progress. During 2004, the NRC observed continuing problems with the plant's corrective action program and with human performance, although improvements in human performance were noted during the second half of the year.

The utility was asked to discuss its efforts in these two areas during the April 19 meeting.

As part of the NRC's increased scrutiny at Point Beach, NRC inspectors will monitor the status and effectiveness of the utility's performance improvement activities in addition to its normal inspection activities.

Routine inspections at the plant are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are Unit 1 reactor vessel head replacement, maintenance effectiveness, problem identification and resolution, radiological protection, and emergency planning.

Current performance information for Point Beach is available on the NRC's web site at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/POIN1/poin1_chart.html and
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/POIN2/poin2_chart.html

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