



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. III-06-034

December 15, 2006

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NRC TO MEET WITH EXELON DEC. 19 TO DISCUSS SAFETY ISSUE AT CLINTON NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet Tuesday, Dec. 19, in Lisle, Ill., with representatives of Exelon Generation Co. to discuss a problem at the Clinton Nuclear Power Station that might have affected the operation of an emergency cooling system pump. The plant, operated by AmerGen Energy Co., an Exelon subsidiary, is located near Clinton, Ill.

The meeting, called a Regulatory Conference, will be at 1:30 p.m. CST in the NRC's Region III Office, Suite 210, 2443 Warrenville Rd., Lisle. The meeting is open to public observation. NRC officials will be available after the business portion of the meeting to answer questions from interested observers.

The meeting will cover the safety significance of an issue identified by NRC inspectors. In a report issued Nov. 29, the inspectors determined that a high pressure core spray pump, part of the emergency reactor core cooling system, had the potential to be damaged under certain circumstances because air might enter the piping supplying water from a large storage tank.

In no instance did the damage occur, and no emergency conditions required the high pressure pump to operate. After inspectors identified the potential problem, plant operators promptly changed the pump's water source to a different storage system to avoid possible pump damage. Subsequently, the system's water source was permanently modified to eliminate the problem.

The meeting's discussion will focus on the safety significance of the problem. The NRC assesses the safety significance of issues with a color codes, ranging from "green" for an issue of very low safety significance, through "white" and "yellow" to "red," indicating high safety significance.

The NRC's initial evaluation has determined that the pump problem represents an issue that is preliminary assessed as "greater than green" (i.e. more than very low safety significance) and requires further review, including additional information from the utility.

The final determination of the safety significance will determine the level of NRC's response to the issue, which could include additional NRC inspections, further meetings with the utility, and other regulatory actions. A decision will be issued several weeks after the meeting and will be available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/enforcement/current.html>.

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