



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Region IV
611 Ryan Plaza Drive – Suite 400
Arlington, Texas 76011-4005
Telephone: (817) 860-8128

No. IV-08-010
Contact: Victor Dricks
Phone: (817) 860-8128

April 2, 2008
E-Mail: opa4@nrc.gov

NRC TO DISCUSS 2007 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR FORT CALHOUN STATION NUCLEAR PLANT APRIL 10

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with Omaha Public Power District representatives on April 10, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Fort Calhoun Station nuclear plant. The plant is located near Omaha, Neb.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel Omaha – Downtown, 555 S. 10th St., Omaha, Neb. The NRC staff will present the results of the assessment, talk about the NRC and its range of activities, and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public before the close of the meeting.

“The NRC continually reviews the safety performance of Fort Calhoun and each of the nation's commercial nuclear power plants,” said Region IV Administrator Elmo E. Collins. “The meeting provides an opportunity for us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with the company, local officials and members of the public. We look forward to meeting with members of the community and answering any questions they may have about our oversight.”

A letter sent from the NRC Region IV office to plant officials 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/fcs_2007q4.pdf.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with “green” and then increase to “white,” “yellow,” and “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

The NRC's assessment concluded that Fort Calhoun operated safely during 2007, but will receive additional oversight because of two “white” findings. One white finding involved the improper installation of a valve in the containment spray system. The second white finding consisted of two violations associated with inadequate corrective actions and improper maintenance on the plant's emergency diesel generators.

As a result, the NRC staff performed a comprehensive inspection in March to provide assurance that the root and contributing causes for the performance issues are understood and appropriate measure are in place to prevent recurrence.

While there have been some improvements in human performance work practices, corrective actions have not yet proven fully effective in addressing deficiencies. The NRC staff will continue to monitor progress in this area, as well as continue to perform the normal, baseline level of inspections.

Routine inspections are performed by inspectors assigned to the plant and by specialists from the Region IV office in Arlington, Texas. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are emergency preparedness, spent fuel storage, radiation protection, and problem identification.

Current performance information for Fort Calhoun Station is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/FCS/fcs_chart.html .

###

NRC news releases are available through a free list serve subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html> . The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.