



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2007 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR QUAD CITIES UNIT 1 AND 2 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Exelon Generation Co. Thursday, May 22, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located in Cordova, Ill.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. CDT at the Best Western SteepleGate Inn, 100 West 76th Street, Davenport, Iowa. 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 performance of the Quad Cities plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region III Administrator James Caldwell said. "This meeting allows us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and area residents. Our goal is to explain how the NRC works and make sure as much information as possible is available on our regulation of these facilities."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant in 2007 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/quad_2007q4.pdf.

The NRC's assessment concluded that the Quad Cities plant operated safely over the past year. 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" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

All of the inspection findings and performance indicators for Quad Cities during 2007 were determined to be "green," with the exception of one "white" finding in the first quarter of 2007 for Unit 1. The finding, identified in 2006, was associated with the utility's failure to ensure that the engineering design for electromatic relief valves was able to operate at the increased vibration levels experienced from the power uprate. The NRC conducted a

supplemental inspection on the issue in February 2007. NRC inspectors identified no significant findings. As a result of this performance, the NRC will conduct the normal, baseline level inspections during the upcoming year.

The NRC letter also addressed a substantive cross-cutting issue in the area of human performance at the Quad Cities plant. The NRC refers to performance deficiencies that affect multiple areas of plant operations as “substantive cross-cutting issues.” Examples of cross-cutting issues could include weaknesses with a plant staff’s ability to identify and correct problems and the staff’s ability to develop effective procedures and adhere to these procedures. These issues cannot be quantified and are not assigned safety significance. When a substantive cross-cutting issue is identified at a nuclear power plant, the NRC expects the problem to be corrected.

At Quad Cities, the substantive cross-cutting issue in human performance relates to documentation practices. The letter noted an increase in incidents associated with this cross-cutting issue during the second half of 2007. The utility evaluated the root causes of the issue and put together a corrective action plan to address it. However, these actions were not fully implemented as of the end of the period. The issue will remain open until human performance improves. The NRC has requested the utility present their plans for resolving this issue during the public meeting.

Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are emergency preparedness, radiation protection, and reactor system operations.

Current performance information for Quad Cities is available on the NRC’s web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/QUAD1/quad1_chart.html (Unit 1) and http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/QUAD2/quad2_chart.html (Unit 2)

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