



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR SEABROOK NUCLEAR PLANT AT PUBLIC MEETING SET FOR APRIL 30 IN HAMPTON, N.H.

The results of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's annual safety performance assessment for the Seabrook nuclear power plant will be the subject of a public meeting on Thursday, April 30.

The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. at the Galley Hatch Conference Center, located at the Best Western Inn at Hampton, 815 Lafayette Road in Hampton, N.H. Prior to the conclusion of both meetings, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

Seabrook, which is the site of a single pressurized-water reactor, is located in Seabrook, N.H. It is owned and operated by FPL Energy Seabrook, LLC.

Overall, Seabrook operated safely during 2008. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed through the NRC Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "green" and no inspection findings that were "greater than green." Therefore, for the rest of 2009, Seabrook will receive the normal, very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well. In 2008, the NRC devoted approximately 6,000 hours of inspection to the facility, including three major team inspections.

"In 2008, all but one of the 26 commercial power reactors in Region I, which covers the Northeastern United States, fully met our clearly defined performance criteria. Seabrook was among those plants achieving those objectives. That means those plants will receive the normal level of NRC oversight this year if they continue to meet the high safety benchmarks set out for each site," said NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins. "That said, our inspectors will remain on the lookout for any problems or adverse trends that might indicate a change in performance. As always, we will not hesitate to act should we identify any safety concerns."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to

“white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a year: During the mid-cycle, or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC’s web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual reports every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The meetings are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for the Seabrook plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/seab_2008q4.pdf . The notice for the annual assessment meeting is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML091070101. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> . Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV .

Routine inspections are carried out by the two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas at Seabrook to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are permanent plant modifications, emergency planning, radiological safety, emergency planning and dissimilar metal welds.

Current performance information for Seabrook is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/SEAB1/seab1_chart.html .

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