



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO CONDUCT OPEN HOUSE ON MAY 21 IN ROYERSFORD, PA., REGARDING ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR LIMERICK NUCLEAR PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an informational open house on Thursday, May 21, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Limerick nuclear power plant.

The open house, which will begin at 6 p.m. at the Limerick Energy Information Center, at 218 Longview Road in Royersford, Pa., will afford members of the public an opportunity to learn first-hand from NRC staff members about performance at the plant during 2008 and the inspection process. Unlike the standard meeting format, the setting will allow citizens to discuss plant-related topics on a one-on-one basis with NRC inspectors assigned to the plant and their NRC Region I supervisors.

Limerick, which is located in Limerick Township (Montgomery County), Pa., is the site of two boiling-water reactors. It is owned and operated by Exelon Generation Co., LLC.

Overall, the Limerick plant operated safely during 2008. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by 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, the plant will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well. In 2008, the NRC devoted approximately 5,300 hours of inspection to Limerick, including four 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. Limerick was among the 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 each plant 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. This interaction is in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for the Limerick plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/lim_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 ML091030520. 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 Limerick and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas at Limerick to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are emergency planning, radiological protection, component design basis and the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel.

Current performance information for Limerick 1 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LIM1/lim1_chart.html . Current performance information for Limerick 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LIM2/lim2_chart.html .

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