



NRC NEWS

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Contact: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

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E-mail: opal@nrc.gov

NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON APRIL 19 IN DELTA, PA. TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PEACH BOTTOM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting on Monday, April 19 regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant during 2009.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at Mt. Nebo Methodist Church, 962 Flintville Road in Delta (York County), Pa. It will take place in the meeting room located on the building's lower level. Prior to the meeting's conclusion, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

Peach Bottom, which is the site of two operating boiling-water reactors, is located in Delta. It is owned and operated by Exelon Nuclear. Exelon managers will participate in the meeting.

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to gauge plant performance. The colors start with "green," representing very low safety significance, to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, Peach Bottom operated safely during 2009. At the conclusion of last year, 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 remainder of 2010, Peach Bottom will continue to receive the normal, very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

In 2009, the NRC devoted approximately 5,800 hours to inspection of the facility, including two major team inspections.

“Each year, the NRC steps back and assesses the performance of nuclear power plants in a systematic and detailed manner. We take these reviews very seriously and they help guide our oversight in the year ahead,” NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. “We also believe that providing the public with an opportunity to not only learn about these results first-hand but to communicate with us on our determinations is an integral part of the process and consistent with our commitment to openness and transparency.”

While no performance indicators or inspection findings were identified during 2009 that would result in additional NRC oversight, the agency will be conducting a follow-up inspection in 2010 to review Exelon’s corrective actions for two acts of deliberate misconduct handled under the NRC’s Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process. The first act involved a maintenance supervisor who provided incomplete and inaccurate information for unescorted access to the site. The second act involved a licensed reactor operator who deliberately failed to report an arrest in accordance with the site’s security program procedures associated with driving under the influence. The NRC staff issued a Confirmatory Order to Exelon on Dec. 1, 2009, formalizing an agreement for both issues that involved several corrective actions at both the Peach Bottom site and across the Exelon nuclear fleet.

The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a 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 Peach Bottom plant is available on the NRC web site at: ML100621009 . The notice for the annual assessment meeting for the plant is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML100760523. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.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.Resources@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by 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 Peach Bottom to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, emergency planning, and radioactive waste handling and transportation.

Current performance information for Peach Unit 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PB2/pb2_chart.html. Current performance information for Peach Bottom Unit 3 is available at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PB3/pb3_chart.html.

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