



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR PALO VERDE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL; MEETING SEPT. 15

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is seeking public comments on its preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the operating licenses for the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station in Maricopa County, Ariz.

As part of Palo Verde's license renewal application, dated December 2008, Arizona Public Service Company (APS) submitted an environmental report. The NRC staff reviewed the report and performed an on-site audit. The staff also considered comments made during the environmental scoping process, including comments offered at public meetings held June 25, 2009.

The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) is open for public comment until October 29 and will be the subject of two public meetings to be held Sept. 15. The first public meeting will be held in the Board Room at the Tonopah Valley High School in Tonopah, Ariz. starting at 2 p.m. The second public meeting will be held in the Plaza Gallery of Komatke Hall at Estrella Mountain Community College in Avondale, Ariz. at 7 p.m. The two meetings will begin with identical overviews, including a discussion of the contents of the draft EIS, and then be opened for public comment. In addition, the NRC staff will host informal discussions 1 hour prior to each meeting at the same facility. NRC staff members will be available to answer questions and provide information about the license renewal process, but no formal comments on environmental issues will be accepted during these informal sessions.

NRC staff will consider written comments on the draft EIS. Comments should be submitted either by mail to the Chief, Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch (RADB), Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop: TWB-05-B01M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Faxes are to be sent to RADB at (301) 492-3446, or by e-mail to PaloVerdeEIS@nrc.gov.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, the NRC staff will consider and address the comments received and issue a final supplement to the generic EIS. That supplement will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability for license renewal.

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating licenses for Palo Verde's Units 1, 2 and 3 expire on June 1, 2025, April 24, 2026 and November 25, 2027, respectively.

The possible environmental effects of an additional 20 years of nuclear plant operation are described in a generic EIS (NUREG-1437). The NRC issues a site-specific supplement to the generic EIS on each plant requesting license renewal. Issues specific to the Palo Verde plant are addressed in Supplement 43.

The Palo Verde draft supplement to the generic EIS and other related documents are available for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room at NRC headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md.; or electronically through the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System through the NRC website at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html. The accession number of the draft supplement is ML102180167. In addition, the draft supplement is available for public inspection at the following locations: Litchfield Park Branch Library, 101 West Wigwam Boulevard, Litchfield Park, Ariz. and Sam Garcia Western Avenue Library, 495 East Western Avenue, Avondale, Ariz.

A copy of the Palo Verde license renewal application is available on the NRC's website at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/palo-verde.html>. Additional information on the NRC's license renewal review process is available at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html.

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NOTE: Anyone wishing to take photos or use a camera to record any portion of a NRC meeting should contact the Office of Public Affairs beforehand.

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