



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

E-mail: opa1@nrc.gov

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

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Contact: Diane Screnci, (610) 337-5330

Email: opa1.resource@nrc.gov

Neil Sheehan, (610) 337-5331

NRC TO DISCUSS MILLSTONE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT AT OPEN HOUSE, MEETING WITH NUCLEAR ENERGY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an open house and public meeting on Thursday, April 19, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Millstone nuclear power plant.

The open house will take place from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Waterford Town Hall, at 15 Rope Ferry Road in Waterford, Conn. Members of the public will have an opportunity to learn first-hand from NRC staff members about the plant's safety performance during 2011 and the NRC's oversight of the facility. The meeting format 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 supervisor.

Immediately following the open house, beginning at 7 p.m. at the same location, NRC staff will meet with the Connecticut Nuclear Energy Advisory Council (NEAC) to discuss the agency's 2011 assessment for the plant. Members of the public will also be afforded an opportunity to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the assessment at that session.

Millstone is the site of two pressurized-water reactors. It is located in Waterford and owned and operated by Dominion Nuclear Connecticut, Inc.

Overall, Millstone operated safely during 2011. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for Millstone Unit 3 that were other than "Green" (very low risk) and no inspection findings that were "Greater than Green" (all findings were of very low safety significance). Therefore, for the rest of 2012, Millstone Unit 3 will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

Millstone Unit 2, however, was in the Regulatory Response Column of the NRC's Action Matrix (http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/actionmatrix_summary.html) at the end of 2011 after receiving a "White" (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding. As a result, the unit will receive additional NRC oversight this year. The finding, which was finalized on Aug. 8, 2011, involves the failure of Millstone Unit 2 personnel to carry out their assigned roles and responsibilities and inadequate reactor power-level management during main

turbine control valve testing, contributing to an unanticipated reactor power increase, from 88 to 96 percent of rated thermal power, on Feb. 12, 2011.

In 2011, the NRC devoted approximately 6,450 hours of inspection to the Millstone plant under its normal battery of reviews included in the agency's Reactor Oversight Process.

"We will be closely watching to ensure that Dominion addresses the issues surrounding the 'White' inspection finding applied to Millstone Unit 2. The company needs to not only understand why the problems occurred but also put in place lasting and meaningful corrective actions," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "Looking back on 2011, our inspectors spent time checking on whether there were any immediate safety concerns at U.S. nuclear power plants following the March events at the Fukushima Daiichi facility in Japan. Those reviews indicated the plants remained safe for continued operation."

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 risk 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 for the Millstone plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/mill_2011q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML12093A0831. The notice for the public meeting with NEAC is available under accession number ML12093A0960. 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 three 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 of performance at Millstone to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, emergency preparedness, the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel and the facility's implementation of a voluntary industry initiative to address potential degradation of underground piping.

Current performance information for Millstone Unit 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/MILL2/mill2_chart.html. Current performance information for Millstone Unit 3 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/MILL3/mill3_chart.html.

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