



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD MEETING WITH PPL ON APRIL 10th IN SALEM TOWNSHIP, PA., TO DISCUSS SUSQUEHANNA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, April 10, to discuss the agency's annual review of safety performance at the Susquehanna nuclear power plant.

NRC staff will meet with representatives of PPL Susquehanna LLC beginning at 6 p.m. to discuss the assessment, which covers calendar year 2012 and was documented in a March 4 letter to the company. The session will take place at the Susquehanna Energy Information Center, at 634 Salem Boulevard in Salem Township (Luzerne County), Pa. The center is located about seven miles northeast of Berwick, Pa. Prior to the meeting's adjournment, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the performance of the plant, as well as the role of the NRC in providing oversight of plant safety.

Overall, the Susquehanna plant — consisting of two boiling water reactors located in Salem Township — operated safely during 2012. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2012, Susquehanna Unit 1 did not have any inspection findings that were greater than green (rising to the level requiring additional NRC oversight) or any performance indicators that were other than green (exceeding the threshold for the indicator and requiring additional NRC oversight).

During 2012, Susquehanna Unit 1 had a white (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding related to an internal flooding event on July 16, 2010, and a white performance indicator for unplanned scrams per 7,000 critical (online) hours. But additional inspections performed by the NRC led to the closure of those issues by the end of last year, returning the unit to the normal level of oversight.

However, recent information related to the performance indicator on unplanned scrams (shutdowns) with complications for Susquehanna Unit 2 resulted in the indicator changing from green to white in the fourth quarter of 2012. Even though the final determination was only recently completed, the change to the performance indicator was effective as of the end of last year. If the number of unplanned scrams with complications exceeds one during the previous 12 months, the indicator will shift from green to white. Since this indicator totaled two at the end of 2012, Susquehanna Unit 2 will now receive additional scrutiny until the NRC is satisfied the

relevant issues have been properly evaluated and satisfactory corrective actions have been developed and implemented.

Plants that meet criteria set out by the NRC receive the normal level of oversight, which still consists of a detailed regime involving thousands of hours of inspection. In 2012, the agency devoted approximately 8,500 hours of inspection to the Susquehanna plant.

“When the time comes to evaluate a plant’s performance for the previous year, we take a fresh look at any and all issues that might be of concern. We then adjust our plans for assessing the facility accordingly,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “With respect to Susquehanna Unit 2, our Reactor Oversight Process dictates that further attention is needed at that site until the issues with the performance indicator change have been fully addressed.”

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess plant performance. The colors begin 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 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. The sessions are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with respect to its activities.

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 of performance to be inspected at Susquehanna this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, emergency planning and underground piping and tanks. There will also be a follow-up inspection because of three or more Severity Level IV traditional enforcement violations in the same area in a 12-month period.

The annual assessment letter for the Susquehanna plant and a follow-up assessment letter documenting the Unit 2 change in performance indicator for unplanned scrams with complications, are available on the [NRC website](#). The [public notice](#) for the April 10 meeting and current performance information for Susquehanna [Unit 1](#) and [Unit 2](#) are also available.

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