



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO DISCUSS VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT AT PUBLIC MEETING SET FOR MAY 12 IN BRATTLEBORO, VT.

The results of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's annual safety performance assessment for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant will be the subject of a public meeting on Monday, May 12. Vermont Yankee, a boiling-water reactor, is located in Vernon (Windham County), Vt., and operated by Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.

At 6 p.m., NRC staff will meet with representatives of Entergy to discuss the assessment, which covers the period from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2007, and was documented in a March 3rd letter to the company. The session will take place at the Red Roof Inn, 1380 Putney Road in Brattleboro, Vt.

Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's performance during 2007, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

"Through a combination of inspection findings and performance indicators, we are able to develop a comprehensive picture of how nuclear power plants are performing with regard to safety," said NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins. "As part of our commitment to make the findings of our reviews accessible to the public, we hold meetings near each plant once a year to share the details of those assessments. We look forward to the opportunity on May 12th to present that information for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant."

The annual assessment letter for Vermont Yankee is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/vy_2007q4.pdf. The notice for the meeting, with agenda attached, is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML081160173. The slides for the meeting can be found under accession number ML081050413. ADAMS is accessible at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>. Help in using ADAMS is available via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR@NRC.GOV.

Overall, Vermont Yankee operated safely during 2007. When considering nuclear power plant performance, the NRC uses color-coded performance indicators and inspection findings. The colors start with “green” and then increase to “white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

At the conclusion of last year, there were no performance indicators for Vermont Yankee that were other than “green” and no inspection findings that were “greater than green.”

Vermont Yankee did have a single “white” (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding open during the first three quarters of 2007. That finding involved the shipment of a package holding radioactively contaminated equipment from Vermont Yankee to a nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania on Aug. 31, 2006. The package was not properly prepared and shipped in conformance with U.S. Department of Transportation radiation level limits. In response to the inspection finding, the NRC conducted a supplemental inspection at Vermont Yankee to determine whether the company’s corrective actions were thorough and appropriate. The NRC determined that was the case, and therefore the finding was closed out effective Oct. 1, 2007.

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 at Vermont Yankee to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, emergency preparedness and operator licensing. The NRC will also conduct a Component Design Bases Inspection and an inspection of the plant’s new dry cask storage facility for spent nuclear fuel.

Current performance information for Vermont Yankee is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/VY/vy_chart.html .

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