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NRC APPROVES LICENSE RENEWAL FOR SHEARON HARRIS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT FOR AN ADDITIONAL 20 YEARS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved the operating license renewal of the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1, in North Carolina for an additional 20 years.

The Harris plant is a pressurized water reactor located about 20 miles southwest of Raleigh, N.C. The operator, Progress Energy, submitted an application for renewal of the license Nov. 16, 2006. Their current license would have expired on October 24, 2026; with the renewal, the license is extended until Oct. 24, 2046.

The NRC's environmental review for this license renewal is described in a site-specific supplement to the NRC's "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants" (NUREG-1437, Supplement 33). Public meetings to discuss the environmental review were held near the plant on April 18, 007 and Jan. 30. The NRC's review was published in August. The review concluded there were no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the license for environmental reasons.

After carefully reviewing the plant's safety systems and specifications, the staff concluded that there were no safety concerns that would preclude license renewal, because the applicant had effectively demonstrated the capability to manage the effects of plant aging. The "Safety Evaluation Report Related to the License Renewal of Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1," was issued in August. In addition, NRC conducted inspections of the plant to verify information submitted by the applicant. The reports relating to the Shearon Harris license renewal are available on the NRC Web site at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/harris.html>.

On Oct. 2, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards – an independent body of technical experts that advises the Commission – issued its recommendation that license renewal for Shearon Harris should be approved. That recommendation is contained in "Report on the Safety Aspects of the License Renewal Application for the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant." This document is available on the NRC Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acrs/letters/2008/>.

The Shearon Harris renewed license brings the total number of renewals to 51 reactor units. A complete listing of renewal applications can be found on the NRC Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html>.

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