



NRC NEWS

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NRC REQUESTS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON APPLICATION FOR NORTH ANNA EARLY SITE PERMIT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has asked Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC (Dominion), to supplement its revised application for an Early Site Permit (ESP) at the North Anna nuclear power plant site, near Mineral, Va.

Dominion submitted its initial application on Sept. 25, 2003, and submitted the revised application on Jan. 13, 2006. The revision reflects a substantial design change to the cooling water system; the proposal now includes a cooling tower rather than lake water to cool discharged water, in order to respond to the state of Virginia's concerns about water use. The proposed reactor has also increased in power output, which will require additional staff review. The revision, however, does not address several aspects of the changes, including the new cooling system's impact on both humans and wildlife downstream from the site.

"Our initial review of Dominion's revisions pointed out several areas that require additional detail," said William Beckner, Deputy Director of the Division of New Reactor Licensing in the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. "Once Dominion provides that information, it should take us about nine months to finish our work on the ESP application."

The NRC staff plans to meet with Dominion shortly to discuss these issues and the additional information the agency is seeking. The staff will issue a supplement to both its draft environmental impact statement (EIS) and safety evaluation report. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the EIS supplement, and will hold a public meeting on the supplement.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. If a permit is granted, the applicant has up to 20 years to decide whether to build a new nuclear unit on the site and to file an application with the NRC for approval to begin construction.

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