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NRC SCHEDULES OPEN HOUSE FOR APRIL 28 TO DISCUSS DUANE ARNOLD NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PERFORMANCE AND NRC OVERSIGHT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled an open house for Thursday, April 28, to discuss with local residents the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Duane Arnold Energy Center and other NRC oversight activities.

The open house is informal and will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. CDT at the Hiawatha Community Center, 101 Emmons St., Hiawatha, Iowa.

The Duane Arnold Energy Center is operated by NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC, and is located in Palo, Iowa, about 8 miles northwest of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Duane Arnold facility and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," said NRC Region III Administrator Mark Satorius. "This meeting allows us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with members of the local community. The goal of this open house is to explain how the NRC works to protect people and the environment and answer questions from residents about nuclear regulation."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III office to plant officials addressed the performance of the plant during 2010 and will serve as the basis for the discussion. It is available on the NRC Web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/duan_2010q4.pdf.

Overall, the NRC found that the Duane Arnold facility operated safely in 2010.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

All performance indicators and inspection findings for Duane Arnold during 2010 were determined to be "green." Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance.

Duane Arnold will continue to receive the detailed inspection regime required for plants that are operating well and require no additional oversight. Inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations being inspected are problem identification and resolution, radiation protection, fire protection, emergency preparedness and dry cask spent fuel storage.

The most current performance information for Duane Arnold is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/DUAN/duan_chart.html.

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