



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON JUNE 1ST IN PLYMOUTH, MASS., TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, June 1, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Pilgrim nuclear power plant during 2010.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, at 4 Home Depot Drive in Plymouth, Mass. Prior to the session's conclusion, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

Pilgrim, which is the site of a single boiling-water reactor, is located in Plymouth. It is owned and operated by Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.

"Our Annual Assessment reviews allow us to step back and gauge whether the nuclear power plants we regulate are on the right track in terms of performance and adhering to the highest levels of safety," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "Once we've completed these evaluations, we reach out to the public to share that information and to receive their feedback at a location near each plant. We welcome and value these exchanges."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with "green", representing very low safety significance, and increase to "white", "yellow" or "red", commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, the Pilgrim reactor operated safely during 2010. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed through the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no 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) for the unit. Therefore, for the remainder of 2011, Pilgrim will continue to receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

On May 16, 2011, the NRC launched a Special Inspection at Pilgrim to review operator performance issues that occurred as the reactor was being returned to service from a refueling and maintenance outage on May 10, 2011. The plant experienced an automatic shutdown as the reactor was being restarted. The results of that inspection will be made public within 45 days of its conclusion.

Routine inspections are carried out by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to each plant and by inspection specialists from the agency's Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. In 2010, the NRC devoted about 5,040 hours to inspection and related activity of Pilgrim, including two major team inspections. Among the areas at Pilgrim being inspected in 2011 are radiological safety, emergency preparedness and the plant's licensed operator requalification program.

The agency issues its review of performance at specific plants twice a year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC's website, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual performance reviews every March, the public is provided with an opportunity to discuss the results. The meetings, which are held in the vicinity of the plant, are in keeping with the NRC's commitment to transparency and openness with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for Pilgrim is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/pilg_2010q4.pdf. The notice for the public meeting is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML111310295 ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resources@nrc.gov.

Current performance information for Pilgrim is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PILG/pilg_chart.html.

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