



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING FOR JUNE 15 TO DISCUSS DAVIS-BESSE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PERFORMANCE AND NRC OVERSIGHT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled a public meeting for Wednesday, June 15, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant and other NRC oversight activities.

The Davis-Besse facility with one reactor unit is operated by FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. It is located near Oak Harbor, Ohio, about 21 miles east southeast of Toledo.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. EDT at the Davis-Besse Energy Education Center, 5501 North State Route 2, Oak Harbor. The NRC staff will discuss the results of the 2010 assessment with FirstEnergy representatives, talk about the NRC and its range of activities, and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public before the close of the meeting.

NRC staff members will be available at 6 p.m. for informal discussions and review of displays discussing NRC activities.

Interested members of the public may also participate in this meeting via a toll-free teleconference. For details, call Viktoria Mitlyng, NRC Senior Public Affairs Officer, at 630-829-9662, by June 10, 2011.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Davis-Besse 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 meeting is to explain how the NRC works to protect people and the environment and to 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/davi_2010q4.pdf.

Overall, the NRC found that the Davis-Besse 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. Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance.

All performance indicators and inspection findings for Davis-Besse at the end of 2010 were determined to be “green” – having very low safety significance.

Davis-Besse received additional regulatory oversight in the first three quarters of 2010 because of a “white” inspection finding, one having low to moderate safety significance. This finding involved the failure of the plant staff to declare an “alert” in a timely manner under its emergency preparedness plan. An alert is the second lowest of the NRC’s four emergency classifications. This failure occurred in June 2009 when a plant transformer was damaged by an electrical fault in voltage measuring equipment.

A follow-up inspection in December 2010 determined that the “white” finding had been adequately resolved, and NRC regulatory oversight was returned to the normal level.

NRC inspectors also identified a potential “cross-cutting” issue with work oversight, principally on repair activities for the reactor vessel head. However, the NRC determined that the utility had identified the issue and implemented corrective actions, and the agency does not have a concern with the plant’s progress in addressing it.

As a result of its performance, Davis-Besse will 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. In addition to the day-to-day inspections by the resident inspectors, areas of plant operations being inspected this year include problem identification and resolution, in-service inspection of safety equipment and systems, radiation protection, emergency preparedness, and replacement of the reactor vessel head.

The most current performance information for Davis-Besse is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/DAVI/davi_chart.html.

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