



NRC NEWS

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CONTACT: Ken Clark (404)562-4416
Roger Hannah (404)562-4417

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E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING DEC. 5 AT OCONEE NUCLEAR PLANT TO DISCUSS CORRECTIVE ACTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE DEFICIENCIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting Dec. 5 at the Oconee nuclear power plant near Seneca, S.C., to discuss with plant officials performance deficiencies, lessons learned, and proposed corrective actions for degraded performance of all three Oconee reactors.

The meeting is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., in the World of Energy at 7812 Rochester Highway in Seneca. The meeting is between the NRC and Duke Energy but is open to observation by the public and media, and NRC officials will be available after the meeting to answer any questions.

NRC Acting Regional Administrator Victor McCree said the Oconee reactors “continue to operate safely” but that two “white” findings and one “white” performance indicator resulted in performance at all three units to be in the degraded cornerstone column of the NRC’s action matrix from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007. That level of performance at a nuclear plant means NRC objectives are being met but there is a minimal reduction in the safety margin, leading to additional meetings between the NRC and plant management, additional NRC inspections and a self-assessment by the plant operator with NRC oversight.

McCree said the degraded performance was a result of: (1) a fourth quarter 2006 “white” inspection finding involving failure to implement adequate foreign material exclusion controls for the Unit 3 reactor building emergency sump; (2) a third quarter 2006 “white” finding involving failure to effectively control maintenance activities, resulting in a breach of the standby shut down facility external flood protection barrier; and (3) a fourth quarter 2006 emergency AC power system “white” performance indicator for the unavailability of the Keowee hydro-electric Unit 2 due to an extended forced outage. The nearby Keowee plant supplies emergency power to the Oconee units if offsite power is unavailable.

A copy of a letter and its enclosure, sent to Duke Energy on November 20, along with supplemental inspection reports of the three White issues and the resulted degraded performance, are available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html .

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