



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2004 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR INDIAN POINT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Entergy Nuclear Northeast on Tuesday, May 10, to discuss the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Indian Point 2 and 3 nuclear power plants. The period of performance to be discussed is Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2004.

Entergy operates the plants, located in Buchanan, N.Y.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at Crystal Bay on the Hudson – Charles Point Marina, 5 John Walsh Blvd., Peekskill, N.Y. Before the session is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's safety performance, as well as the agency's role in ensuring safe operation of the facility.

Starting at 7 p.m., NRC staff will conduct a separate question-and-answer period. This session will begin with a brief discussion regarding the agency's process for reviewing license renewal applications. Nuclear plant security requirements will also be discussed. To date, Entergy has not submitted a license renewal application for either of the Indian Point plants. The current operating licenses for Indian Point 2 and 3 will not expire until Sept. 28, 2013 and Dec. 15, 2015, respectively. However, in response to requests from some local officials, the NRC has agreed to discuss at a public meeting how such an application, if filed, would be reviewed.

With regard to the annual assessment meeting, NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said the agency "continually reviews the performance of the Indian Point plants and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities. This meeting will provide an opportunity for a discussion of our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and residents who live near the plant. Our goal is to explain the NRC oversight process and make as much information as possible available to the public regarding our regulation of these facilities."

Overall, the Indian Point plants operated safely during the period. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear power plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety

significance of the issues involved. During 2004, all of the inspection findings and performance indicators for the Indian Point plants were determined to be “green.” Therefore, the plants will receive a baseline level of inspections during the upcoming assessment period.

In the NRC’s 2004 mid-year assessment for the Indian Point plants, the agency discussed the continuation of a substantive cross-cutting issue in the area of problem identification and resolution. A cross-cutting issue is one that affects several different areas of performance. Based on a team inspection of the plants’ problem identification and resolution program in September 2004, the NRC determined that Entergy is taking steps to improve performance in that area. Nevertheless, the inspection also found inconsistency in the program’s implementation, including 10 related “green,” or very low safety significance, inspection findings for Indian Point 2 last year. As a result, the cross-cutting issue will remain open for Indian Point 2. Further evaluations will be conducted during NRC follow-up inspections.

Although Indian Point 2 had an open “white” inspection finding at the beginning of 2004 for a degraded control room fire barrier, that finding was closed out in the first quarter of last year based on the results of NRC supplemental inspections of the issue done in June 2003 and December 2003.

Routine inspections are performed by four NRC resident inspectors assigned to the plants and by inspection specialists from the Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa., and the agency’s headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year are radiological safety, emergency preparedness and problem identification and resolution.

A letter sent from the NRC Region I Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/inpt_2004q4.pdf. The notice and slides for the annual assessment meeting are available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession numbers ML051090564 and ML051100011, respectively. ADAMS is accessible via the agency’s web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in using ADAMS is available by contacting the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737 or by e-mail at PDR@nrc.gov.

Current performance information for Indian Point 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/IP2/ip2_chart.html.

Current performance information for Indian Point 3 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/IP3/ip3_chart.html.

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