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NRC BEGINS REVIEW OF FENOC'S ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF DAVIS-BESSE SHIELD BUILDING CRACKS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has initiated its rigorous review of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co.'s (FENOC) causal analysis of cracks in the shield building at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station, and will schedule a public meeting and issue an inspection report to communicate its conclusions to the public once the review is complete.

FENOC submitted the root cause analysis of shield building cracks Feb. 28 in compliance with commitments the company made to the NRC. The root cause analysis will be publicly available online through the NRC's [ADAMS](#) document database. The Davis-Besse plant is located in Oak Harbor, Ohio, approximately 21 miles southeast of Toledo.

In addition to reviewing FENOC's root cause submittal, the agency will assess the company's proposed corrective actions and long-term monitoring program of the shield building. Four NRC inspectors have been monitoring FENOC's investigation of the root cause since it started.

On Oct. 10, 2011, the NRC was informed by FENOC that its workers identified cracks in the shield building while the plant was shut down to replace the reactor vessel head. The shield building is a 2.5-foot thick reinforced concrete building that surrounds a 1.5-inch thick steel containment vessel that encloses the reactor. The two buildings are separated by a 4.5-foot space.

The NRC thoroughly reviewed the cracks after they were discovered and determined that they did not pose an imminent safety issue. However, before the plant returned to service, the NRC issued a Confirmatory Action Letter to FENOC documenting its commitments to determine the cause of the shield building cracks by Feb. 28 and to implement long-term measures to ensure that the shield building continues to fulfill its safety function.

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