



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES LETTER ON PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR POINT BEACH NUCLEAR POWER STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a letter to Nuclear Management Company, confirming the company's plans to improve performance at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Station. The facility, which has two reactor units, is located near Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

The letter, called a Confirmatory Action Letter, documents Nuclear Management's plans and discusses how the NRC will monitor the improvement activities.

The plant is under heightened NRC oversight because of safety problems which occurred at the plant in 2001 and 2002. These problems, which would have affected the operation of a plant safety system, the auxiliary feedwater system, under certain accident conditions, were determined to be of "high safety significance" by the agency. The specific equipment problems have been corrected.

The auxiliary feedwater system is used to safely cool the reactor if problems occur during plant operations and to continue removing heat from the reactor after shutdown.

In February the company submitted its plans to improve performance at the plant and supplemented those plans on March 22. These plans address improvement activities for human performance, engineering design control, communications between the engineering and operating staffs, emergency preparedness, and the corrective action program -- how the company finds, evaluates, and fixes problems.

To monitor the progress and effectiveness of Nuclear Management's improvement programs, the NRC will conduct periodic inspections in addition to normal oversight activities and hold public meetings with the company approximately every six weeks. These inspections will cover engineering design activities, review the corrective action program, and evaluate the progress of the company's improvement initiatives.

The Confirmatory Action Letter will be available in the NRC's online document system at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> [use accession number ML041130468] and from the Region III Office of Public Affairs.

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