



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa.
Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

No. I-05-017

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April 6, 2005

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2004 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR THREE MILE ISLAND 1 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of AmerGen Energy Co., LLC, on Wednesday, April 13, to discuss the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Three Mile Island 1 nuclear power plant. The period of performance to be discussed is January 1 to December 31, 2004.

AmerGen, a subsidiary of Exelon, operates the plant, located in Middletown, Pa.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Middletown Borough Hall, 60 W. Emaus St., Middletown. 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.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Three Mile Island plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. "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 Three Mile Island 1 plant 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. Because all of the inspection findings and performance indicators for Three Mile Island 1 during 2004 were determined to be "green," the plant will receive a baseline level of inspections during the upcoming assessment period.

In a mid-cycle letter dated Aug. 30, 2004, the NRC had advised AmerGen that a "substantive cross-cutting issue," a performance issue touching multiple program areas, still existed in the area of Problem Identification and Resolution. Specifically, the issue stemmed from instances where plant staff either did not question or did not sufficiently evaluate equipment problems. Although

the NRC continued to identify some findings in this area in the latter half of 2004, they were of very low safety significance and more narrow in scope than during the previous assessment period. Further, corrective actions in the Problem Identification and Resolution area resulted in increased use of the Three Mile Island problem reporting system. In light of these developments, the NRC staff has closed out this substantive cross-cutting issue.

Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant 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 by NRC specialists are fire protection, radiological safety and emergency response.

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/tmi_2004q4.pdf. The slides for the meeting are available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML050840369. 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 Three Mile Island 1 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/TMI1/tmi1_chart.html.

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