



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region II
61 Forsyth Street SW, Atlanta GA 30303
Web Site: www.nrc.gov

No: II-08-032

May 15, 2008

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

E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC ISSUES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR VOGTLE NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL; PUBLIC MEETING JUNE 3

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has reached the preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts which would preclude renewal of the operating licenses for the two units at the Vogtle nuclear power plant, operated by Southern Nuclear Operating Company near the town of Waynesboro, Ga., southeast of Augusta. That conclusion is contained in the NRC's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Vogtle plant, which was issued in late April.

Members of the public will have an opportunity on June 3 to comment on the report at two meetings scheduled in Waynesboro. On June 29, 2007, the NRC received an application from Southern Nuclear to renew the Vogtle licenses for an additional 20 years. The original NRC operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years, but may be renewed for up to 20 additional years if requirements are met. The current operating licenses for the Vogtle units are due to expire on Jan. 16, 2027 for Unit 1 and February 9, 2029 for Unit 2.

As part of its license renewal application, the company submitted an environmental report. The NRC staff reviewed that report and performed an on-site audit. The staff also considered comments made during the environmental scoping process, and at two public meetings held on Sept. 27, 2007, in Waynesboro.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has prepared and issued its draft environmental impact statement, which preliminarily recommends that the Commission determine the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for the Vogtle nuclear plant are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy planning decision-makers would be unreasonable. This recommendation is based on five factors: 1) the analysis and findings in the Generic Environmental Impact Statement used for license renewal reviews; 2) the plant-specific environmental report submitted by Southern Nuclear; 3) NRC consultation with other federal, state and local agencies; 4) the NRC staff's own independent review; and 5) the NRC staff's consideration of public comments received during the environmental scoping process.

The NRC will hold two meetings on June 3 to accept comments on the draft report. The first meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. A second meeting will get under way at 7 p.m. Both meetings will take place at the Augusta Technical College, Waynesboro Campus, 216 Highway

24 South in Waynesboro. NRC staff will be available for an hour prior to the start of each meeting for informal, one-on-one discussions.

Those interested may pre-register to attend or speak at the meetings by contacting J. P. Leous, the NRC Environmental Project Manager, by telephone at 1-800-368-5642, extension 2864, or by e-mail at JPL1@nrc.gov. Members of the public may also register 15 minutes before each session to provide oral comments. The duration of individual comments may be limited by the number of speakers who register.

Written comments on the draft report submitted before July 16, 2008, will also be considered by the NRC staff. Comments can be submitted by mail to Chief, Rulemaking, Directives and Editing Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to Vogtle_LR_EIS@nrc.gov (note – if typed, address is Vogtle_LR_EIS@nrc.gov).

The draft report is posted on the NRC web page at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1437/supplement34/. The Vogtle license renewal application is posted at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/vogtle.html. Additional information about the license renewal process is available at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html.

The draft report is also available for review at the Burke County Library, 130 Highway 24 South in Waynesboro.

###