



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. 08-210

November 18, 2008

NRC STAFF ISSUES SAFETY EVALUATION FOR VOGTLE EARLY SITE PERMIT, LIMITED WORK REQUEST APPLICATIONS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued its safety evaluation report (SER) for a requested Early Site Permit (ESP) and limited work authorization (LWA) at the Vogtle site, about 25 miles southeast of Augusta, Ga.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. Southern Nuclear filed the Vogtle ESP application Aug. 15, 2006. Southern filed a related LWA request on Aug. 16, 2007, seeking permission for construction activities limited to placement of engineered backfill, retaining walls, lean concrete, mudmats, and a waterproof membrane.

In a separate review, the NRC is considering Southern's application for a Combined License to build and operate two AP1000 reactors on the Vogtle ESP site. Southern currently operates two reactors on land adjacent to the site.

The 800-page SER contains the agency's review of Southern's ESP and LWA applications. The NRC staff reviewed information on:

- site seismology, geology, meteorology and hydrology;
- risks from potential accidents resulting from operation of a nuclear plant at the site;
- the site's ability to support adequate physical security for a nuclear plant; and
- proposed major features of the emergency plan Southern would implement if reactors are eventually built at the site.

The report is available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., and on the NRC's Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/esp/vogtle.html>. In addition, the Burke County Library in Waynesboro, Ga., has agreed to make the SER available for public inspection.

The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards will review the SER during their December 4-6 meeting and could suggest changes before the staff finalizes the report. The

Atomic Safety and Licensing Board must also conclude a hearing on the application before the agency's final decision on the Vogtle ESP, which is currently expected by late 2009.

Information about the new reactor licensing process is available on the NRC Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors.html>.

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