



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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LICENSING BOARD TO HOLD HEARING IN GEORGIA MARCH 16-25, TAKE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON VOGTLE SITE PERMIT APPLICATION

The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB), an independent judicial arm of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, will conduct a hearing from March 16 - 25 in Augusta and Waynesboro, Ga., concerning an Early Site Permit (ESP) application for the Vogtle site near Waynesboro.

The Board will also hold oral limited appearance sessions March 22 – 23 in Waynesboro for the public to comment on both the ESP application and a related Combined License (COL) application for a new nuclear power plant.

The Board will hear presentations, starting at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 16, and continuing through Thursday, March 19, as necessary, from NRC staff, the applicant, Southern Nuclear Operating Co., and several groups opposing the ESP application. This portion of the hearing will cover the groups' objections to portions of the application describing potential methods for cooling additional reactors that could be built at the Vogtle site, as well as potential dredging of the Savannah River that would support any construction at Vogtle. These sessions will be held at the Doubletree Hotel and Convention Center, 2651 Perimeter Parkway in Augusta.

The Board will conduct separate sessions on the uncontested portions of the ESP application, starting at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 23, and continuing through Wednesday, March 25, as necessary. This portion of the hearing will cover whether the remainder of the application and the NRC staff's review meet the requirements of the Atomic Energy Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. These sessions will be held in the auditorium of the Augusta Technical College's Waynesboro/Burke campus, 216 Highway 24 South in Waynesboro.

The Board is also in the early stages of conducting a proceeding on Southern Nuclear's related COL application for permission to build and operate two AP1000 reactors at the Vogtle site. The Board will hold oral limited appearance statement sessions March 22 and 23 at the Augusta Technical College's Waynesboro/Burke campus for members of the public to comment on both the ESP and COL proceedings.

Members of the public have until 5 p.m. on March 13 to pre-register for these comment sessions. The first session will run from 3 – 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 22; the second will run from 7 – 9 p.m. on Monday, March 23. Updates to the sessions' scheduling information will appear on the NRC Web site at www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/index.cfm , and will be available by phone at (800) 368-5642 x5036.

Members of the public who pre-register will receive priority to speak at the meetings. Written pre-registration requests must be e-mailed to the ASLB by March 13, and each request must specify the session (Sunday or Monday) at which the requester wishes to make an oral statement. The Board reserves the right to cancel a session if there is a lack of public interest, and conclude a session ahead of the scheduled ending time if all speakers present have made a presentation.

Anyone wishing to submit a written request to make an oral statement may e-mail wen.bu@nrc.gov , emily.krause@nrc.gov and paul.bollwerk@nrc.gov ; or send mail to: Administrative Judge G. Paul Bollwerk, III, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, Mail Stop: T-3F23, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

Written limited appearance statements on the Vogtle ESP and COL proceedings may be submitted at any time via e-mail to hearingdocket@nrc.gov or by mail to: Office of the Secretary, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

The ASLB strongly advises those attending the prehearing conference or comment sessions to arrive early to allow time for security screening. The Board also requests attendees avoid bringing unnecessary hand-carried items, such as packages, briefcases, backpacks, or other items that might need individual examination. Attendees will not be able to store such items outside the rooms, and items requiring inspection could delay a person's admission to a session. Items that could readily be used as weapons are banned from the room where these sessions will be held. The ASLB's rules for the public comment sessions limit signs to 18 square inches, and signs may not be attached to sticks, held above one's head, or moved about in the room. Signs are prohibited during the hearing sessions. Anyone attempting to disrupt the hearing or comment sessions will be removed.

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