



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR OYSTER CREEK PLANT AT PUBLIC MEETING SET FOR MAY 28 IN TOMS RIVER, N.J.

The results of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's annual safety performance assessment for the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant will be the subject of a public meeting on Thursday, May 28.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn at 290 Route 37 East in Toms River, N.J. Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility. In addition, the NRC will conduct an informational open house from 6 to 7 p.m. at the same location that will allow members of the public to ask questions of agency staff on a one-on-one basis. This would include questions regarding the NRC's license renewal activities.

Oyster Creek, which is located in Lacey Township (Ocean County), N.J., is the site of a single boiling-water reactor owned and operated by Exelon Generation Co., LLC. The NRC approved a 20-year extension of the plant's operating license on April 8.

Overall, the Oyster Creek plant operated safely during 2008. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "green" and no inspection findings that were "greater than green." During the remainder of 2009, Oyster Creek will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC. In 2008, the NRC devoted approximately 6,100 hours of inspection to Oyster Creek, including three major team inspections.

"In 2008, all but one of the 26 commercial power reactors in Region I, which covers the Northeastern United States, fully met our clearly defined performance criteria. Oyster Creek was among the plants achieving those objectives," said NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins. "That said, our inspectors will remain on the lookout for any problems or adverse trends that might indicate a change in performance. As always, we will not hesitate to act should we identify any safety concerns."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with “green” and then increase to “white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a year: during the mid-cycle, or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC’s web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual reports every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The meetings are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for the Oyster Creek plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/oc_2008q4.pdf. The notice for the annual assessment meeting is available in ADAMS under accession number ML091330051. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by the two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to Oyster Creek and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas at Oyster Creek to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are permanent plant modifications, the plant’s Radiological Environmental Monitoring Program, emergency preparedness and the Licensed Operator Requalification Program.

Current performance information for Oyster Creek is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OC/oc_chart.html.

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