



NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES MEETINGS TO DISCUSS 2010 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR WATTS BAR 1 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND CONSTRUCTION INSPECTIONS FOR WATTS BAR 2

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled a meeting and open house on Thursday, April 28 to provide information on the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for Unit 1 at the Watts Bar nuclear power plant during 2010. The NRC will also provide a presentation on the agency's assessment of construction activities at Watts Bar Unit 2.

An informal open house is scheduled to start at 2 p.m. at the Comfort Inn, located at 2811 Decatur Pike in Athens, Tenn. The NRC staff will make a presentation on the safety performance of Watts Bar Unit 1 during 2010 and will be available following the business portion of the meeting to answer questions on the plant's safety performance as well as NRC oversight and inspection. A presentation on Unit 2 is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. in the same room and will also be followed by a question and answer session.

The Watts Bar plant, which has one operating pressurized-water reactor and one unit currently completing construction, is located near Spring City, Tenn., about 60 miles southwest of Knoxville. It is owned and operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Overall, the NRC staff concluded that Watts Bar Unit 1 operated safely in 2010, and there were no inspection findings or performance indicators that would cause the NRC to increase its level of oversight and inspection. Based on the plant's performance, the NRC staff plans to continue the detailed routine or baseline inspections all nuclear power plants receive.

"Every year, the NRC evaluates the safety performance of nuclear plants in a systematic and detailed way. These reviews allow us to respond to ongoing issues, if needed, and to plan our future inspections," NRC Region II Administrator Victor McCree said.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess operating plant performance. The colors start with "green," which has very low safety significance, to "white," "yellow" or "red," based on the significance of the issues. Inspection findings and performance indicators are updated on the NRC's web site (www.nrc.gov) each quarter.

The annual assessment letter for Watts Bar Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/wb_2010q4.pdf.

Routine inspections are carried out by the NRC resident inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region II office in Atlanta.

Current performance information for Watts Bar Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WB1/wb1_chart.html.

The NRC assessment of Unit 2 found that, overall, TVA conducted construction activities in compliance with NRC regulations and the conditions of the plant's construction permit. Based on that assessment, the NRC will not expand its activities beyond detailed inspections planned and currently being conducted.

Information on Watts Bar Unit 2 can be found at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/watts-bar.html.

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