



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON MARCH 30 IN PLYMOUTH, MASS., TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an open house on Tuesday, March 30 regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Pilgrim nuclear power plant during 2009.

The open house will run from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, 4 Home Depot Drive in Plymouth, Mass. Members of the public will have an opportunity to learn first-hand from NRC staff members about performance at the plant during 2009, as well as NRC oversight of the facility. The meeting format will allow citizens to discuss plant-related topics on a one-on-one basis with NRC inspectors assigned to the plant and their NRC Region I supervisor.

Pilgrim is a boiling-water reactor located in Plymouth. It is owned and operated by Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.

Overall, Pilgrim operated safely during 2009. 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." Therefore, for the remainder of 2010, Pilgrim will continue to receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

In 2009, the NRC devoted 5,483 hours to inspection of the facility, including three major team inspections.

"Each year, the NRC steps back and assesses the performance of nuclear power plants in a systematic and detailed manner. We take these reviews very seriously and they help guide our oversight in the year ahead," NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. "We also believe that providing the public with an opportunity to not only learn about these results first-hand but to communicate with us on our determinations is an integral part of the process and consistent with our commitment to openness and transparency."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to gauge plant performance. The colors start with “green,” representing very low safety significance, to “white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the significance of the issues involved. In addition to issuing inspection reports, the agency puts out reports which assess performance at specific plants twice a 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 Pilgrim plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/pilg_2009q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML100680540. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. 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.Resources@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas at Pilgrim to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are radiation safety, permanent plant modifications and emergency planning.

Current performance information for Pilgrim is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PILG/pilg_chart.html.

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