



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE APRIL 6 IN PRINCE FREDERICK, MD., TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR CALVERT CLIFFS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an open house on Tuesday, April 6 regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant during 2009.

The open house will run from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express, at 355 Merrimac Court in Prince Frederick, Md. 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 about NRC oversight of the facility. The meeting format being used 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.

Calvert Cliffs, which is the site of two pressurized-water reactors, is located in Lusby (Calvert County), Md. It is owned and operated by Constellation Energy.

Overall, Calvert Cliffs operated safely during 2009. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC Reactor Oversight Process, a "white" (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding was open for both Calvert Cliffs 1 and 2. The finding involved an incorrect Emergency Action Level decision-making table. It resulted in the units being placed in the "Regulatory Response" column of the NRC's Action Matrix and receiving additional oversight from the agency.

On Dec. 4, 2009, the NRC completed a supplemental inspection at the plant to determine whether Constellation had performed a thorough root-cause evaluation of the "white" inspection finding and put in place satisfactory corrective actions. In a report summarizing the results of that inspection issued on Jan. 15, the NRC determined the company had taken appropriate steps to address the issue and therefore closed out the finding. As such, this finding has been removed from consideration in the performance assessment process as of the first quarter of 2010, and the plant will receive the NRC's normal, very detailed oversight regime for the rest of the year.

In 2009, the NRC devoted 6,500 hours to inspection of the facility, including two 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 issues performance reviews for each plant 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 Calvert Cliffs plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/calv_2009q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML100780100. 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 Calvert Cliffs to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, radiation safety, fire protection and operator licensing initial exams.

Current performance information for Calvert Cliffs 1 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CALV1/calv1_chart.html. Current performance information for Calvert Cliffs 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CALV2/calv2_chart.html.

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