



NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES OPEN HOUSE TO DISCUSS 2009 PERFORMANCE OF CATAWBA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled an open house Monday, April 19 to provide information on the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Catawba nuclear power plant during 2009.

The open house is scheduled to run from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Rock Hill City Hall Rotunda, 155 Johnston St. in Rock Hill, S.C., and it will allow people to learn about the plant's performance last year as well as NRC oversight and inspection.

The Catawba plant, which has two pressurized-water reactors, is located near York, S.C., about 17 miles south of Charlotte. It is owned and operated by Duke Energy.

Overall, the NRC staff concluded that the Catawba plant operated safely in 2009, 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 Luis Reyes said. "This open house gives local officials and citizens an opportunity to learn more about our oversight and is consistent with our commitment to openness and transparency."

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess 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 the Catawba plant is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/cat_2009q4.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. Among the areas at the

Catawba plant to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are the site's independent spent fuel storage facility, groundwater protection, potential gas accumulation in the emergency core cooling system, dissimilar metal welds and operator licensing exams.

Current performance information for Catawba Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CAT1/cat1_chart.html. Current performance information for Catawba Unit 2 is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CAT2/cat2_chart.html.

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