



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. 10-065

April 8, 2010

NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION AT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS APRIL 20 IN ROCKVILLE, MD.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will host a public workshop April 20 at the agency headquarters to hear from a variety of government, industry, academic and public experts about whether NRC policies on groundwater contamination at nuclear plants need modification.

“There has been substantial recent attention on radioactive water leaks at commercial nuclear plants,” said Chuck Casto, deputy regional administrator of the NRC’s Arlington, Texas, office, who is leading a task force to examine agency practices. “We want to know if external stakeholders think there are gaps in what we are doing and determine whether there are policy issues that should be brought to the Commission.”

Recent incidents at several nuclear plants involving groundwater contamination have prompted plant owners and the NRC to look at the sources of the contamination. While the actions in each case have successfully identified the sources and ensured that licensees correct the problem, they have prompted the NRC to examine the adequacy of the actions and the agency’s regulatory framework. Some actions are still under way.

Casto said the agency is evaluating whether the actions it has taken or plants have taken – both in response to these incidents and to recommendations made in the 2006 Liquid Radioactive Release Lessons Learned Task Force Final Report (ML062650312) – need to be augmented. He said the scope of the review will include, but not be limited to: industry experience and actions; health impacts; the regulatory framework; NRC inspection; enforcement and reporting; international perspectives; and communication with external stakeholders.

The meeting will be held from 10 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. in the Commission Conference Room at the NRC headquarters at 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. The meeting will be webcast and can be viewed at the time of the meeting at: <http://video.nrc.gov/live/>.

The meeting format will include a roundtable discussion by invited federal and state regulators, industry, academic and public interest experts in an open forum. Each roundtable participant will have the opportunity to make a short presentation in their area of expertise. That will be followed by a facilitated discussion among the roundtable participants. Other attendees

with questions or concerns, and responses to those questions and concerns, will follow the roundtable discussion at two points in the program, at the close of the morning session and again at the conclusion of the afternoon roundtable discussion.

On Monday, April 19, the NRC will hold another session on groundwater contamination in Brattleboro, Vt. This session is largely devoted to listening to residents in the area around the nearby Vermont Yankee plant and detailing for them the oversight provided by the NRC as plant owner Entergy tracked down and repaired a tritium leak.

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NOTE: Anyone wishing to take photos or use a camera to record any portion of a NRC meeting should contact the Office of Public Affairs beforehand.

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