



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2009 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR POINT BEACH NUCLEAR POWER PLANT APRIL 22

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting with representatives of FPL Energy Point Beach on Thursday, April 22, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant. The plant has two reactors located in Two Creeks, Wisc., roughly 40 southeast of Green Bay.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. CDT at the Two Creeks Town Hall, 5128 East Tapawingo Rd. The NRC staff will present the results of the annual assessment, talk about the NRC and its range of activities and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Point Beach plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region III Administrator Mark Satorius said. "This meeting allows us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and area residents. One of NRC's main goals is to explain to people in the community how the agency regulates nuclear power plants."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC Web site at:

http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/poin_2009q4.pdf.

The NRC found that the Point Beach nuclear plant met all NRC safety objectives during 2009, and performance at both units was at a level that resulted in no additional NRC oversight. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

All performance indicators and inspection findings for Point Beach during 2009 were determined to be “green.” Performance indicators are a statistical measurement of plant and equipment performance.

In 2009 the NRC closed out two substantive cross-cutting issues in the areas of human performance and problem identification and resolution based on NRC review. Cross-cutting issues are issues that “cut across” multiple areas of plant operation. Examples of cross-cutting issues include weaknesses with a plant staff’s ability to identify and correct problems and the staff’s ability to develop effective procedures and adhere to these procedures. These issues cannot be quantified and are not assigned safety significance. When a substantive cross-cutting issue is identified at a nuclear power plant, the NRC expects the problem to be corrected.

Point Beach will continue to receive the detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that require no additional oversight. Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency’s headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are radiation protection, fire protection and a reactor power uprate.

Current performance information for Point Beach is available on the NRC’s web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/POIN1/poin1_chart.html (Unit 1) and http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/POIN2/poin2_chart.html (Unit 2).

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