



NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES OPEN HOUSE TO DISCUSS 2009 PERFORMANCE OF CRYSTAL RIVER POWER PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled an open house for Monday, May 3, and will be available to discuss and answer questions about the agency's assessment of safety performance during 2009 at the Crystal River nuclear power plant. The plant, operated by Progress Energy, is located near Crystal River, Fla. about 80 miles north of Tampa.

The open house is informal and scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. at the Crystal River nuclear plant Training Center, 8200 West Venable Street in Crystal River. During the open house, NRC staff will be available to answer questions on the safety performance of the Crystal River plant last year, as well as the NRC's role in ensuring safe plant operation.

"Every year, the NRC evaluates the safety performance of nuclear plants in a systematic and detailed way," NRC Region II Administrator Luis Reyes said. "These reviews allow us to respond to ongoing issues, if needed, and to plan our future inspections. This open house gives local officials and citizens near the Crystal River plant an opportunity to learn more about our oversight and is consistent with our commitment to openness and transparency."

A letter sent from the NRC Region II office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during 2009 and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/cr_2009q4.pdf.

The NRC found that the Crystal River plant's 2009 performance met all of the agency's safety objectives and was at a level that results in no additional NRC oversight. This year, the NRC plans to continue to conduct the very detailed inspections required at those plants that are operating well. In addition, the agency will also complete inspections related to the steam generator replacement, license renewal and managing gas accumulation in emergency core cooling systems.

Last fall, the plant shut down for a planned refueling outage and to replace the steam generators inside containment. When workers began to create an opening to remove the old steam generators, a gap was discovered in the concrete near the outer portion of the shield

building. That prompted the NRC to launch a special inspection. That inspection has not been completed and its results could affect the NRC's assessment of the plant's performance.

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.

Current performance information for the Crystal River plant is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CR3/cr3_chart.html.

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