



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON MAY 4 IN SHIPPINGPORT, PA. TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR BEAVER VALLEY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an open house on Tuesday, May 4 regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Beaver Valley nuclear power plant during 2009.

The open house will take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Shippingport Community and Municipal Building, at 164 State Road 3016 in Shippingport. 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.

Beaver Valley, which is the site of two pressurized-water reactors, is located in Shippingport (Beaver County). It is owned and operated by FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co.

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, and increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, Beaver Valley operated safely during 2009. At the conclusion of last year, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "green" and no inspection findings that were "greater than green." Therefore, for the remainder of 2010, Beaver Valley will continue to receive the normal, very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

In 2009, the NRC devoted about 6,000 hours to inspection of the facility, including four 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.”

In addition to issuing inspection reports, the agency 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 Assessment letters 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 Beaver Valley plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/bv_2009q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML100960041. 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 Beaver Valley to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are emergency preparedness, permanent plant modifications and radiation safety. An additional inspection will be performed to evaluate the follow-up on corrective actions for violations and deviations at the plant.

Current performance information for Beaver Valley 1 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BV1/bv1_chart.html. Current performance information for Beaver Valley 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BV2/bv2_chart.html.

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