



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SCHEDULES MEETING TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE OF HARRIS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled a meeting on Tuesday, May 18 to provide information on the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Harris nuclear power plant during 2009.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. with an open house and poster session followed by a brief presentation at 7 p.m. at the New Horizons Fellowship, 820 E. Williams Street in Apex, N.C. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session. NRC staff will discuss the plant's performance last year as well as NRC oversight and inspection.

The Harris plant, which has one pressurized-water reactor, is located near New Hill, N.C., about 20 miles southwest of Raleigh. It is operated by Progress Energy.

Overall, the NRC staff concluded that the Harris 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 meeting 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 Harris plant is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/har_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 Harris plant being inspected this year by NRC specialists are groundwater protection, dissimilar metal welds and potential gas accumulation in the emergency core cooling system.

Current performance information for Harris is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/HAR1/har1_chart.html.

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