



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

2443 Warrenville Road

Lisle IL 60532

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov> E-mail: opa3@nrc.gov

No. III-06-008

March 10, 2006

CONTACT: Jan Strasma (630) 829-9663
Viktoria Mitlyng (630) 829-9662

NRC TO DISCUSS 2005 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR PERRY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet in Painesville, Ohio, on Tuesday, March 14, with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for the year 2005 at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located at Perry, Ohio.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. in the Barberrry Room at the Renaissance Quail Hollow Resort, 11080 Concord-Hambden Road, Painesville.

In addition to the performance assessment, the NRC staff will also discuss the results of recent inspections which reviewed the actions taken by FirstEnergy to address past performance issues at the plant. Before the meeting is adjourned, the NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the safety performance of the Perry plant, as well as the role of the NRC in ensuring safe plant operation.

"The Perry plant continues to operate safely," said James Caldwell, NRC Region III Administrator. He added that the plant remains under heightened NRC scrutiny as a result of equipment problems which occurred over a two-year period from 2002 through 2004.

"This meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and residents who live near the plant," Mr. Caldwell continued. "Our goal is to explain the NRC oversight process and make as much information as possible available to the public regarding our regulation of these facilities."

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/perr_2005q4.pdf

Because of past performance problems, the NRC conducted a broad-based team inspection at the Perry plant from January through May 2005. This inspection, as well as others during the year, identified issues with the plant's corrective action program and with staff performance.

Perry's performance issues are being addressed by a revised Performance Improvement Initiative, developed by FirstEnergy, but NRC inspectors concluded that these issues continue to occur. NRC and FirstEnergy will discuss the company's response to these continuing issues during the March 14 meeting.

Routine inspections at the Perry plant are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors 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 emergency preparedness, maintenance, fire protection, and radiation protection as well as continuing to evaluate the utility's efforts to address corrective action and human performance issues.

Current performance information for Perry is available on the NRC's web site at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PERR1/perr1_chart.html .

###