



NRC NEWS

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Contact: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

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Email: opal@nrc.gov

NRC TO DISCUSS 2004 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., on Thursday, March 24, to discuss the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Pilgrim nuclear power plant. The period of performance to be discussed is January 1 to December 31, 2004.

Entergy operates the plant, which is located in Plymouth, Mass.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. at the John Carver Inn, 25 Summer St. in Plymouth. Before the session is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's safety performance, as well as the agency's role in ensuring safe operation of the facility.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Pilgrim plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. "This meeting will provide an opportunity for a discussion of our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and residents who live near the plant. 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 I 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/pilg_2004q4.pdf.

Overall, the Pilgrim plant operated safely during the period. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear power plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. Because all of the inspection findings and performance indicators for Pilgrim during 2004 were determined to be "green," the plant will receive a baseline level of inspections during the upcoming assessment period.

However, the NRC is still evaluating an unresolved item involving a senior control room operator who

was found to be inattentive while on the job on June 29, 2004. Once a decision is reached on the appropriate response to this issue, the NRC may revise its assessment, as well as its inspection plans for the facility.

Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are emergency response and preparedness, radiological safety and permanent plant modifications.

Current performance information for the Pilgrim plant is available on the NRC web site at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/PILG/pilg_chart.html .

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