No. 99-207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Tuesday, September 28, 1999)

NRC SENDS LETTERS TO UTILITIES TO FOLLOW UP Y2K READINESS AT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has sent letters to those utilities with nuclear power plants that are scheduled to be "Y2K ready" after September 30 to verify the status of readiness and the dates when plants will be fully Y2K ready.

There are no Y2K-related problems affecting the performance of safety systems needed to safely operate or shut down at any of the 103 nuclear power plants. By September 30, 91 of these plants are scheduled to have completed all remaining Y2K work for their computer systems that support plant operation. In addition, they will have contingency plans in place. The remaining 12 plants have additional work to complete on a few non-safety systems or devices, to be fully Y2K ready. These plants are continuing to progress toward Y2K readiness.

As a follow-up to July 1 Y2K readiness reports from licensees, the NRC has sent letters to these 12 plants to ensure that all deficiencies are repaired before the Y2K transition. In order to schedule NRC inspections, licensees were asked to provide any changes to the scope of remaining Y2K work or to the projected completion date (previously provided to NRC July 1). The NRC sent letters to the following plants:

Plant Name	Nearest City	Y2K Ready Date
Comanche Peak Unit 1	Glen Rose, TX	11/30/99
Comanche Peak Unit 2	Glen Rose, TX	10/30/99
Cook Units 1 & 2	Bridgman, MI	10/30/99
Hope Creek	Hancocks Bridge, NJ	10/29/99
Farley Unit 2	Columbia, AL	12/16/99
Peach Bottom Unit 3	Delta, PA	10/31/99
Salem Unit 1	Hancocks Bridge, NJ	11/6/99
Salem Unit 2	Hancocks, Bridge, NJ	10/29/99
South Texas Units 1 & 2	Bay City, TX	10/31/99
Three Mile Island Unit 1	Middletown, PA	10/21/99

Typically, the remaining work will be completed in conjunction with a scheduled plant outage or when a replacement component is delivered. The NRC will continue to monitor and verify completion of Y2K activities at these plants.

Details of the remaining work are provided in an NRC report, NUREG 1706, "Year 2000 Readiness in U.S. Nuclear Power Plants." It is available on the NRC's Y2K web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/NEWS/year2000.html.

The "Y2K" problem refers to a computer's potential inability to recognize dates beginning with January 1, 2000, and beyond. It arises from computer programs that use two-digit numbers to represent a calendar year (such as "98" for 1998). For example, a computer system could read "00" as 1900, rather than 2000, potentially causing a computer system to malfunction. "Y2K ready" means that functions provided by a computer will be carried out successfully with the coming of the Year 2000.

#