



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta GA 30303
Web Site: www.nrc.gov/OPA

No. II-00-17

April 19, 2000

CONTACT: Ken Clark (404)562-4416/e-mail: kmc2@nrc.gov
Roger D. Hannah (404)562-4417/e-mail: rdh1@nrc.gov

NRC STAFF TO HOLD PREDECISIONAL ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE APRIL 25 WITH DUKE POWER TO DISCUSS REGULATORY SAFETY CONCERNS AT OCONEE

MEETING IS OPEN TO OBSERVATION BY THE PUBLIC

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a predecisional enforcement conference with officials of Duke Energy Company in Atlanta on Tuesday, April 25, at 8:00 a.m. (EDT) to discuss regulatory safety questions the agency has concerning emergency feedwater systems at the three-unit Oconee nuclear power plant, located near Seneca, South Carolina.

The meeting will be held in the NRC offices located on the 24th floor of the Sam Nunn Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, SW. It will be open to observation by interested members of the public and news media representatives. NRC officials will be available at its conclusion to answer questions from observers who attend.

NRC officials said the conference is being held to discuss seven apparent violations involving potential loss of suction water sources and potential single action failures in the emergency feedwater systems at the three-reactor plant. The apparent violations also involve what the NRC believes to be inadequate corrective action, reporting, and safety evaluations for changes to the systems and their applicable design criteria. Emergency feedwater systems at Oconee are used to supply water to the secondary cooling systems in each unit's steam generators to provide a means to remove heat during an interruption of normal feedwater supply during an emergency.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that a determination has been made that a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. The purpose is to discuss apparent violations, their causes and safety significance, to provide the licensee with an opportunity to point out errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report and to enable the company to outline its proposed corrective actions.

No decision on the apparent violations or any contemplated enforcement action, such as a civil penalty, will be made at the conference. Those decisions will be made by NRC officials at a later time.