



NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

61 Forsyth Street SW, Atlanta GA 30303

Web Site: www.nrc.gov/OPA

No. II-01-033

July 30, 2001

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NRC HOLDS PUBLIC MEETINGS AT GLOBAL NUCLEAR FUEL PLANT AUGUST 7 TO DISCUSS PLANT PERFORMANCE AND REVISED NRC OVERSIGHT PROGRAM

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials will hold public meetings on August 7 in Wilmington, North Carolina, to discuss the agency's latest review of safety performance at the Global Nuclear Fuel-Americas plant and to provide information on revisions and improvements in the agency's oversight program for nuclear fuel cycle facilities.

The Licensee Performance Review, which covers regulatory safety compliance at the plant for a period from May 16, 1999 through May 12, 2001, indicates that the facility continues to operate safely and adequately protects special nuclear material against theft and diversion, NRC officials say the plant demonstrated a number of regulatory safety strengths during the period of review and cited the plant's "proactive efforts" to clean up settling ponds located on the plant site and to properly dispose of stored radioactive waste materials. NRC officials pointed out, however, that improvement is needed in attention to details during management reviews, in emergency procedures, and in configuration control used in processing radioactive material. NRC officials said that, based upon the plant's "demonstrated performance strengths," the agency has decided to maintain a reduced level of inspection at the facility and will continue to focus inspections on various waste reduction processes at the site. Copies of the Licensee Performance Review can be obtained on the NRC Internet web page at www.nrc.gov/OPA/reports/fuelrevs.htm.

Revisions to the NRC oversight program are intended to make it more risk-informed and performance-based. Other goals of the revised program are to provide earlier and more objective indications of facility performance in the areas of safety and national security, to increase stakeholder confidence in the NRC and to increase regulatory effectiveness, efficiency and realism. The public meeting will focus on the revisions, and those interested can offer suggestions. The proposed revisions are described in NRC documents SECY-99-188 and SECY-00-0222, located on the NRC Internet web page at www.nrc.gov/NRC/COMMISSION/SECYS/index.html. A general review of the proposed revisions is available at www.nrc.gov/NMSS/FCSS/FCOB/INSP/REVISED/fcindex.htm.

The meeting on oversight program revisions will begin at 10:00 a.m. at the plant site at 3901 Castle Hayne Road, followed immediately at 10:30 a.m. by the meeting on plant assessment. Both meetings are open to observation by the public, and NRC officials will be available at the conclusion to answer questions from interested observers.

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