



NRC NEWS

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

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No. II-02-029

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May 24, 2002

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NRC DRAFT REPORT FINDS McGUIRE LICENSE RENEWAL ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE; PUBLIC INPUT SOUGHT AT MEETINGS IN JUNE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is seeking public comment on its preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the operating licenses for the two units at the McGuire nuclear plant near Huntersville, North Carolina.

The information is contained in a draft environmental impact statement on the proposed license renewal issued earlier this month. That document is open for public comment until August 2, and will also be the subject of public meetings on Wednesday, June 12. Two similar meetings will be held in the auditorium at Central Piedmont Community College, 11920 Verhoeff Road, Huntersville. There will be one session in the afternoon at 1:30 and one in the evening at 7:00. In addition, the NRC staff will host informal discussions one hour prior to each meeting. NRC staff members will be available to answer questions and provide additional information about the process during those informal sessions, but no comment submittals on environmental issues will be accepted then.

The two sessions will begin with identical overviews, including a discussion by NRC staff and its contractors of the contents of the draft supplement to the GEIS. The meeting will then be opened for public comment.

For planning purposes, interested parties are encouraged to pre-register to attend or to present oral comments at the June 12 meetings by contacting James Wilson of the NRC by telephone at (800) 368-5642, extension 1108, or by e-mail at McGuireEIS@nrc.gov no later than June 7. Interested persons may also register to speak before the start of each session. Time for individual comments at the meetings may be limited to accommodate all speakers.

Written comments on the draft supplement to the GEIS will also be considered by NRC staff. Comments should be submitted either by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop T-6 D 59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to McGuireEIS@nrc.gov.

The NRC has been reviewing the application for extension of the McGuire licenses since Duke Energy, which operates the plants, filed it in June 2001. Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant is issued for up to 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating licenses for

McGuire will expire on June 12, 2021, for Unit 1 and March 3, 2023, for Unit 2.

The possible environmental effects of an additional 20 years of nuclear plant operation are described in the NRC's Generic Environmental Impact Statement, or GEIS (NUREG-1437). The NRC issues a site-specific supplement to the GEIS on each plant requesting license renewal to address the potential environmental impacts. Issues specific to McGuire are addressed in Supplement 8. The NRC staff's preliminary recommendation is that the Commission determine that the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for the two units at McGuire are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy-planning decision makers would be unreasonable.

The draft supplement to the GEIS, along with other related documents, is available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room at NRC headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland; or electronically on the Internet at www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1437/supplement8 . In addition, the J. Murrey Atkins Library at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte has agreed to make the draft supplement to the GEIS available for public inspection.

At the conclusion of the public comment period the NRC staff will consider and address the comments provided and issue a final supplement to the GEIS. That supplement will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability for license renewal.

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