



NRC NEWS

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE OF COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION JULY 22

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Energy Northwest on July 22 to discuss the results of the agency's assessment of safety performance at the Columbia Generating Station. The plant is located near Richland, Washington.

The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. at the Energy Northwest Office Complex, Walkley room, 3000 George Washington Way, Richland. The public is invited to observe the meeting and NRC officials will be available before the conclusion of the meeting to answer questions from the public.

"The meeting will give area residents a chance to hear first-hand how NRC inspectors think the plant has been run from a safety standpoint. It is the plant's responsibility to operate in a safe manner, and this is our report card on how they've done in the past year," said NRC Region IV Administrator Bruce S. Mallet.

The performance period to be discussed is January 1 to December 31, 2003. In addition, the NRC staff will provide an overview of how the agency Reactor Oversight Process works.

A letter from the NRC to Energy Northwest addresses the performance of the plant during this 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/wnp_2003q4.pdf

The NRC concluded that the plant operated safely last year and will receive routine inspections during 2004.

With regard to security issues, the letter points out that NRC has issued several orders and threat advisories to enhance security capabilities at all nuclear power plants and improve guard force readiness since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The agency has also conducted inspections to review the implementation of these requirements and has monitored the action of plant operators in response to changing plant conditions. The NRC will continue security inspections during 2004.

Current performance indicators for Columbia are available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WASH2/wash2_chart.html .

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