



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

2443 Warrenville Road

Lisle IL 60532

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov> E-mail: opa3@nrc.gov

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CONTACT: Jan Strasma (630) 829-9663
Viktoria Mitlyng (630) 829-9662

NRC TO DISCUSS 2004 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR FERMI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Detroit Edison Co. Wednesday, May 25, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance last year at the Fermi Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located near Newport, Mich.

The meeting, which will be open to public observation, is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at the Monroe County Board Of Commissioners' Chambers of the County Courthouse, 125 E. Second Street, in Monroe, Mich.

Before the meeting is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the safety performance of the Fermi plant, as well as the role of the NRC in ensuring safe plant operation.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Fermi plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region III Administrator James Caldwell said. "This meeting will provide an opportunity for a discussion of our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and residents who live near the plant. Our goal is to explain the NRC oversight process and make as much information as possible available to the public regarding our regulation of these facilities."

The NRC's assessment concluded that the Fermi plant operated safely during the period. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

During 2004, Fermi had one "white" performance indicator that had to do with the unavailability of emergency AC power. The NRC also identified several findings related to human performance.

Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are radioactive waste and transportation, fire protection, problem identification and resolution, radiological access control, and safety system design and performance.

A letter sent from the NRC Region III Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the 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/ferm_2004q4.pdf.

Current performance information for Fermi is available on the NRC's web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/FERM2/ferm2_chart.html.

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