



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO DISCUSS DECOMMISSIONING WORK AT WINDSOR, CONN., SITE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public meeting in Windsor, Conn., on Wednesday, Dec. 12, to provide an update on decommissioning activities at a former nuclear fuel manufacturing facility in that community owned by ABB, Inc. The NRC, which is responsible for oversight of the facility, will discuss changes in decommissioning and oversight responsibilities that have been implemented to facilitate the completion of remaining cleanup activities.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. at Windsor Town Hall, 275 Broad St. Before the session is adjourned, members of the public will have an opportunity to pose questions and provide comments to the NRC staff.

“As always, the NRC’s focus is on protecting the public and the environment when it comes to radioactive materials,” said Keith McConnell, Deputy Director of the NRC’s Decommissioning and Uranium Recovery Licensing Directorate. “At the meeting on December 12th, we will be able to share details of the remaining work envisioned for the ABB, Inc., site and explain what our agency is doing to ensure it will be carried out in as safe a manner as possible, with an eye toward future unrestricted release of the property.”

ABB, Inc. (formerly Combustion Engineering-Windsor) manufactured nuclear fuel at the site, which is bordered by Day Hill Road to the south. It was also used at various times to conduct and support nuclear research and development work, including the construction, testing and operation of a U.S. Naval test reactor. The activities began in the mid-1950s and continued until 2001. As a result of those operations, soils, buildings and equipment surfaces were contaminated with uranium and byproduct material, both of which are radioactive.

On April 7, 2003, ABB, Inc., submitted a site-wide decommissioning plan to the NRC. A revised plan that included radiation dose-modeling information was submitted on Oct. 15, 2003. Several buildings on the site were subsequently demolished and the waste materials shipped off-site to a licensed disposal facility.

Meanwhile, certain portions of the site were to be remediated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). Radioactive contamination resulted from defense-related activities at the facility. The buildings and areas where the defense-related materials are located were used by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission prior to the early 1960s, when the first nuclear manufacturing license was issued to Combustion Engineering.

Site studies have identified areas where the commercially generated and defense-related materials have become co-mingled. Consequently, a process was identified to facilitate the effective and efficient cleanup of the remainder of the site. This process, under the oversight of the NRC, will involve ABB, Inc., assuming responsibility for cleanup of all the radioactive contamination.

Once all the decommissioning work is completed, ABB, Inc., must demonstrate to the NRC that the entire property meets the criteria for “unrestricted release.” In order for a site to be deemed safe for unrestricted release, any residual radioactivity would have to be within allowable levels.

The current decommissioning plan for the site is available in the NRC’s electronic document system, which can be accessed at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> . Slides from a presentation ABB, Inc., made to the NRC in September regarding the plan are available under Accession Number ML072600282.

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