



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
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Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. I-09-028
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May 14, 2009
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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT FOR INDIAN POINT NUCLEAR PLANT AT PUBLIC MEETING SET FOR MAY 21 IN TARRYTOWN, N.Y.

The results of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's annual safety performance assessment for the Indian Point nuclear power plant will be the subject of a public meeting on Thursday, May 21.

The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Doubletree Hotel, at 455 South Broadway in Tarrytown, N.Y. (Directions are available at: http://doubletree1.hilton.com/en_US/dt/hotel/TERHIDT-Doubletree-Hotel-Tarrytown-New-York/directions.do.) Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility. In addition, the NRC will conduct an informational open house from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the same location that will allow members of the public to ask questions of agency staff on a one-on-one basis.

Indian Point, which is located in Buchanan (Westchester County), N.Y., is the site of two operating pressurized-water reactors. Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., owns and runs the facility.

Overall, the Indian Point plant operated safely during 2008. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "green" and no inspection findings that were "greater than green." During 2009, Indian Point will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC, as well as enhanced oversight in the area of groundwater contamination. In 2008, the NRC devoted approximately 16,700 hours of inspection to Indian Point, including seven major team inspections.

"In 2008, all but one of the 26 commercial power reactors in Region I, which covers the Northeastern United States, fully met our clearly defined performance criteria. Indian Point was among the plants achieving those objectives," said NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins. "That said, our inspectors will remain on the lookout for any problems or adverse trends

that might indicate a change in performance. As always, we will not hesitate to act should we identify any safety concerns.”

In addition to the regular inspection program for the plant, the NRC will continue enhanced oversight of Entergy’s actions to address issues associated with on-site groundwater contamination at Indian Point. That increased oversight will continue until actions described in an NRC Deviation Memo are completed. That memo can be found in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML083590057. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> .

The NRC will also continue to monitor activities required for Indian Point to receive final approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the plant’s new siren system. The new system received provisional approval from FEMA on Aug. 22, 2008, and was placed in service on Aug. 27, 2008. The NRC staff completed an inspection of Entergy’s activities related to the installation of the new system in December 2008 and concluded, in an inspection report issued on Jan. 27, 2009, that enhanced inspections and oversight in that area were no longer warranted. Nevertheless, the NRC will monitor Entergy’s efforts to obtain final FEMA approval and corrective actions to address the causes of delays associated with the new system’s installation via a focused problem identification and resolution baseline inspection.

The NRC’s mid-cycle review letter for Indian Point, issued last September, advised Entergy that a “substantive cross-cutting issue” – an issue that touches on multiple areas of performance – in the area of human performance related to procedure adequacy at both Unit 2 and 3 was being continued. That decision was based on criteria for clearing the issue, which was first identified in 2007, not yet being met. During the following 6 months of the performance assessment cycle, NRC staff reviewed the company’s actions to address the concerns, including a safety culture assessment conducted by Entergy. Based on the results of its inspections relative to this cross-cutting area, the NRC concluded that Entergy had demonstrated sustainable performance improvement and effective implementation of corrective actions. As such, the agency determined the criteria for clearing the substantive cross-cutting issue has been satisfied. The NRC will continue to monitor performance in this area through the agency’s normal inspection program.

A second substantive cross-cutting issue noted in the Indian Point mid-cycle review letter involved the area of problem identification and resolution at Indian Point 2. The issue, which related to the implementation of corrective actions, was continued at that time because the exit criteria had not yet been achieved. The NRC reviewed Entergy’s actions to address the issue during inspection activities over the following 6 months. As a result of those inspections, the NRC has determined the criteria, including sustained improvements and effective implementation of corrective actions, have been met. Therefore, the issue has been cleared. The agency will continue to monitor performance in this area through the normal inspection program.

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with “green” and then increase to “white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a year: during the mid-cycle,

or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC's web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual reports every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The meetings are in keeping with the agency's commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for the Indian Point plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/inpt_2008q4.pdf . The notice for the annual assessment meeting is available in ADAMS under accession number ML091120310. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV .

Routine inspections are carried out by the four NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to Indian Point (two each to Indian Point 2 and 3) and by inspection specialists from the agency's Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas at Indian Point to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are radiological protection, emergency planning, component design basis and the loading of dry cask storage units holding spent nuclear fuel.

Current performance information for Indian Point 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/IP2/ip2_chart.html . Current performance information for Indian Point 3 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/IP3/ip3_chart.html .

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