



NRC NEWS

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THE NRC WILL KEEP PERRY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN CURRENT PERFORMANCE COLUMN

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will continue to monitor the Perry Nuclear Power Plant in Column 3 of the agency's action matrix, despite a security finding and issues discovered with Perry's occupational radiation safety program. The NRC chose not to move Perry into Column 4 at this time because recent inspections found that the unresolved issues exist in the single area of occupational radiation safety and are not widespread. The NRC will conduct a follow-up inspection, after which a final determination on Perry's position in the action matrix will be determined.

Perry is operated by FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. and is located in Perry, Ohio, about 35 miles northeast of Cleveland.

"The NRC decided to deviate from its process and continue to monitor the plant in Column 3 because Perry's overall performance is adequate and has improved. Perry does not exhibit the widespread problems we normally see in Column 4 plants. Its challenges are confined to occupational radiation protection and we expect the plant to resolve them quickly," said NRC Region III Administrator Charles Casto.

Perry entered Column 3 in 2011 as a result of a "white" finding and a "white" performance indicator in the occupational radiation protection area which evaluates the plant's ability to make sure radiation exposure to workers is effectively managed. The plant is operating safely and there were no overexposures to workers as a result of these issues.

The NRC's inspection in response to these issues concluded that FirstEnergy did not resolve all the challenges with occupational radiation protection and the issues remain open. In addition, in January 2012, Perry had a "greater-than-green" finding in the security area which, according to a subsequent NRC inspection, is not indicative of current plant performance. By NRC process, the occupational radiation protection deficiencies and the security finding would normally result in the downgrade in the NRC's response to Column 4.

The NRC will reassess the decision to keep the plant in Column 3 by conducting a follow-up inspection between May and July 2013. The inspection will determine if Perry has successfully resolved the performance challenges in occupational radiation protection and ensure these performance problems do not extend to other areas of plant performance.

If the follow-up inspections show the problems have not been resolved, the NRC will take further actions and may move the plant to Column 4.

The NRC's action matrix reflects overall plant performance. There are five columns in the matrix with Column 1 requiring a baseline level of inspections. A move up in columns results in an increased level of NRC oversight and inspections.

The deviation memo and NRC inspection reports are available of through the NRC RIII Office of Public Affairs and the NRC's web site: <http://adams.nrc.gov/wba> .

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