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NRC to Meet With Nextera On June 24 to Discuss Performance of Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will conduct a public open house and meeting on Tuesday, June 24, to discuss the agency's annual review of safety performance at the Seabrook nuclear power plant, located in Seabrook, N.H.

The public meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Best Western Plus — The Inn at Hampton, at 815 Lafayette Road in Hampton, N.H. It will include a formal question-and-answer session regarding plant performance and oversight topics. It will be preceded by an open house planned for 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. at the same location. During the open house, there will be an opportunity for attendees to hold one-on-one discussions with NRC staff members about the plant's performance and the agency's oversight of the facility.

Under the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators are used to assess plant performance. (Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance which, if exceeded, trigger additional NRC oversight.) The colors range from green, connoting very low safety or security significance, to white, yellow or red, for an issue of high significance.

Overall, the Seabrook plant, which is owned and operated by NextEra, operated safely during 2013. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the 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 (that is, none of the findings exceeded very low safety significance). As a result, Seabrook will continue to receive the NRC's normal level of oversight during the remainder of 2014, barring any changes.

These inspection activities include reviews specifically focused on the company's efforts to fully understand concrete degradation identified at the plant and its future impact on safety-related structures. NextEra has applied to the NRC for a 20-year license extension for Seabrook. The agency will not issue a final decision on the application until a plan to address the concrete degradation problem – also referred to as alkali silica reaction, or ASR – has been developed and carefully evaluated.

The normal level of oversight consists of a detailed regime entailing thousands of hours of inspection. In 2013, the NRC devoted approximately 7,240 hours of inspection to Seabrook, which is a single-unit pressurized-water reactor.

“We take very seriously the task of stepping back on a regular basis to size up plant performance. These comprehensive evaluations help guide our reviews for the year ahead, though we maintain flexibility should conditions change,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “Seabrook, by virtue of its performance in 2013, will receive our routine – though still substantial – battery of inspections.”

The NRC issues reports on performance at each plant 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 a quarterly basis on the agency’s website. Following the release of the Annual Assessment letters each March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results.

Normal inspections are carried out by the two Resident Inspectors assigned to Seabrook. Reviews are also performed at the site by specialist inspectors assigned to the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas to be inspected this year at Seabrook are fire protection, emergency planning and the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel. In addition, the NRC will inspect the plant’s implementation of an industry initiative to monitor the condition of underground piping.

The [Annual Assessment letter](#) for Seabrook, as well as the [meeting notice](#) for the June 24 open house and meeting, are available on the [NRC’s website](#). Current performance information is also available for [Seabrook](#).