



NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2006 PERFORMANCE AT CATAWBA NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is scheduled to meet with Duke Energy Corporation officials on Thursday, May 3, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance last year at the Catawba nuclear power plant, located near York in northwestern South Carolina.

The meeting, which is open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m. in the Rock Hill, S.C., City Council Chambers. The NRC staff will present the results of the assessment and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public before the close of the meeting.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Catawba plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region II Administrator William Travers said. "This meeting is a chance for us to discuss that safety performance with the company, with local officials and with people living near the plant."

A letter sent from the NRC Region II 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 www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/cat_2006q4.pdf.

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," depending on the safety significance of the issues involved.

The NRC said the Catawba plant operated safely during 2006 with all inspection findings being "green," or of very low safety significance, and all performance indicators also indicating performance at levels requiring no additional NRC oversight.

As a result, the NRC plans to conduct only routine baseline inspections at the plant for the rest of 2006. The NRC staff will also conduct several non-routine inspections, including the independent spent fuel storage facility, reactor vessel head and head penetrations, containment emergency re-circulation sump modifications and initial reactor operator licensing exams.

Current information for the Catawba plant is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CAT1/cat1_chart.html and www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CAT2/cat2_chart.html.

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