

No: I-14-009

March 18, 2014

CONTACT: Diane Screnci, 610-337-5330

Neil Sheehan, 610-337-5331

NRC Schedules Open House for March 27 to Discuss Performance of Salem, Hope Creek Nuclear Power Plants

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will conduct an open house on Thursday, March 27, to discuss the agency's annual review of safety performance at the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear power plants.

During the open house, scheduled for 5 to 7 p.m. at the PSEG Energy & Environmental Resource Center, at 244 Chestnut St. in Salem, N.J., members of the public will be able to hold one-on-one discussions with NRC staff regarding the plants' performance in 2013, as well as the agency's oversight plans for the facilities this year. NRC staff in attendance will include the NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plants on a full-time basis and their supervisor.

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 Salem and Hope Creek plants -- located in Hancocks Bridge (Salem County), N.J., and owned and operated by PSEG Nuclear LLC -- performed safely during 2013. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plants that were other than "green" (very low risk) and no inspection findings that were "greater than green" (that is, none of the findings exceeded very low safety significance). As a result, Salem and Hope Creek will continue to receive the NRC's normal level of oversight during 2013, barring any changes.

The normal level of oversight consists of a detailed regime entailing thousands of hours of inspection. In 2013, the NRC devoted approximately 5,700 hours of inspection at Salem and approximately 5,900 hours at Hope Creek

"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. "Salem

and Hope Creek, by virtue of their 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 Salem and the two Resident Inspectors assigned to Hope Creek. Reviews are also performed at the sites 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 Salem are the plant’s radiological safety program and control room operator exams, while at Hope Creek they will include permanent plant modifications and heat sink performance. The NRC will also evaluate a hostile action-based emergency exercise in May involving Salem and Hope Creek and the implementation of an industry initiative to monitor the condition of underground piping at both sites.

The Annual Assessment letters for [Salem](#) and [Hope Creek](#), as well as the [meeting notice](#) for the March 27th open house, are available on the NRC [website](#). Current performance information is also available for [Salem 1](#), [Salem 2](#) and [Hope Creek](#).