

No: I-17-008

March 23, 2017

Contact: Diane Screnci, 610-337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610-337-5331

NRC to Conduct Open House to Discuss 2016 Performance of Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Power Plants

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will be available to discuss the 2016 safety performance of the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear power plants during a public open house planned for March 28 in Salem, N.J.

The open house is scheduled from 5-6 p.m. at the PSEG Energy & Environment Resource Center, 244 Chestnut St. On hand to discuss the plants' performance and the NRC's oversight of the facilities will be agency employees responsible for inspections of the plant, including the resident inspectors based at the site on a full-time basis.

Salem, which has two operating reactors, and Hope Creek, which has one, operated safely during 2016 based on NRC reviews. As of the end of last year, Salem Unit 1 had no inspection findings or performance indicators outside the normal band. As a result, it is currently subject to the NRC's baseline level of oversight, which still entails thousands of hours of inspection each year. Both plants are owned and operated by PSEG.

Salem Unit 2 and Hope Creek are currently under increased NRC oversight. Salem Unit 2 moved to Column 2 of the agency's action matrix in the second quarter of 2016 after its performance indicator for unplanned scrams (shutdowns) per 7,000 hours critical (online) crossed the threshold from green (very low safety significance) to white (low to moderate safety significance). This occurred as a result of the reactor experiencing four unplanned shutdowns during this timeframe.

Hope Creek moved to Column 2 of the action matrix last month, after an inspection finding for the plant was finalized as white. The inspection finding centered on a determination that the plant's safety-related high-pressure coolant injection system was inoperable for greater than 14 days, and therefore exceeded the plant's technical specifications.

In response, the NRC will perform supplemental inspections at Salem Unit 2 and Hope Creek in 2017.

“Additional scrutiny is being provided for Salem Unit 2 and Hope Creek, consistent with our Reactor Oversight Process,” said NRC Region I Administrator Dan Dorman. “Once PSEG notifies us of its readiness, we will carry out these reviews to ensure that appropriate corrective actions have been carried out to address the issues; that the root causes are fully understood; and that the problems do not extend to other areas of plant operations.”

Under the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, the agency gauges plant performance through the use of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators, which are statistical measurements of plant performance that can trigger additional oversight if exceeded. Any inspection findings or performance indicators that are greater than green trigger increased NRC oversight.

Day-to-day inspections are performed by two resident inspectors assigned to Hope Creek and two to Salem. Reviews are also carried out 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 will be radiological safety, emergency preparedness, and the plant's problem identification and resolution program. At Hope Creek, the focus areas will include the dry cask storage of nuclear fuel and the environmental qualification program for safety-related components.

The annual assessment letters for [Salem](#) and [Hope Creek](#), as well as the [notice](#) for the March 28 open house, are available on the NRC website. Current performance information is also available for [Hope Creek](#) and Salem [Unit 1](#) and [Unit 2](#).