

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Region III Office of Public Affairs
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NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT: RIII-99-33
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NRC STAFF SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING JUNE 8 TO DESCRIBE
NEW NRC INSPECTION PROGRAM FOR QUAD CITIES NUCLEAR POWER STATION

****EARLIER MEETING WILL DISCUSS PLANT PERFORMANCE REVIEW****

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will describe a significantly new pilot inspection and assessment program for the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station in a public meeting on June 8 in Rock Island, Illinois.

The meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Third Floor Board Room, Rock Island County Supervisors Office, 1504 Third Avenue, Rock Island. The meeting will include a description of the new program and an opportunity for questions and comments from the public.

Earlier that day the NRC staff will meet with Commonwealth Edison Company, operator of the plant, to discuss the recent Plant Performance Review of the plant. That meeting will be at 1:30 p.m. in the Training Building at the plant site, 22712 206th Avenue North, Cordova, Illinois.

The afternoon meeting also will be open to public observation. NRC officials will be available after the meeting for comments and questions from the public.

[The Plant Performance Review assessment of Quad Cities was previously covered in News Announcement RIII-99-19, issued on April 2. The text of the plant performance review letter is available from the NRC Region III Office of Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr/254ppr1.htm>]

The Quad Cities plant is one of nine in a pilot program which begins June 1 to test and evaluate the new program. Following the six-month trial, the program is expected to be extended next year to all 103 commercial nuclear power reactors.

The NRC developed the new reactor inspection and assessment program to use its resources more effectively and efficiently. The changes reflect improvements in nuclear power plant safety performance over the past 20 years. Plants that perform well will have less regulatory oversight than plants that have problems.

A "core" inspection program will continue for all nuclear plants with NRC resident inspectors on site supplemented by specialists from one of four NRC regional offices. If performance declines at a plant, the NRC will step up its regulatory activities for that plant.

The new assessment program will focus in part on performance indicators -- statistics

that show how the plants are performing. In addition, NRC inspectors will monitor a number of plant activities that are not measured by the indicators. The inspections will pay particular attention to how well the plant staff finds and fixes problems.

The pilot inspection and assessment program begins in June at nine power plant sites -- Hope Creek and Salem in New Jersey, FitzPatrick in New York, Prairie Island in Minnesota, Quad Cities in Illinois, Shearon Harris in North Carolina, Sequoyah in Tennessee, and Fort Calhoun and Cooper in Nebraska.

A fuller description of the new inspection and oversight program is available on the NRC's internet web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>. Questions may also be addressed to opa@nrc.gov.

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