

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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NRC STAFF SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING IN RALEIGH ON JULY 13
TO DESCRIBE NEW INSPECTION AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

CP&L's Harris Nuclear Power Plant Is One of Nine Participating In Pilot Program

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a public meeting in Raleigh on the evening of Tuesday, July 13 to describe a new pilot inspection and assessment program being conducted at Carolina Power & Light Company's Shearon Harris nuclear power plant.

The meeting will be held from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m. (EDT) at the Homewood Suites Hotel, located at 100 MacAlyson Court in Cary, N.C., a Raleigh suburb. Take U.S. 1 South from Raleigh to exit 98B. It will be open to observation by interested members of the public, and NRC officials will be available at its conclusion to take questions and comments from those who attend.

Harris is one of nine commercial nuclear power plants participating in a trial, six-month NRC pilot program which began June 1 to test and evaluate a new inspection and assessment program intended for use by the NRC staff at all 103 of the nation's commercial nuclear power reactors next year.

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

The new program will continue to utilize "baseline" inspections at all licensed, commercial nuclear power plants with NRC resident inspectors on site, supplemented by specialists from one of four NRC regional offices and/or the agency's headquarters in Washington, D.C. If performance declines at a plant, NRC regulatory activities for that facility will increase.

The new assessment program will focus in part on common "performance indicators" which provide information on how well a plant is performing. NRC inspectors will also monitor a number of plant activities that are not measured by the indicators. Inspections will pay particular attention to how well the plant's staff finds and corrects problems.

The pilot program includes, in addition to Harris, Sequoyah in Tennessee, Hope Creek and Salem in New Jersey, Fitzpatrick in New York, Prairie Island in Minnesota, Quad Cities in Illinois, and Fort Calhoun and Cooper in Nebraska.

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

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