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NRC ISSUES LATEST PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has found that safety performance remains acceptable in the NRC's latest plant performance review at the Beaver Valley Power Station in Shippingport, Pennsylvania. The two unit site is operated by Duquesne Light Company.

In a letter to the Company, NRC Region I official Richard Crlenjak said that during a review period from April 1998 through January 1999, "Overall, Duquesne Light Company performance was acceptable at Beaver Valley; shutdown and operating activities were conducted safely at both units."

Mr. Crlenjak noted improvements in the areas of operations and engineering. And, he recognized that station personnel used the condition report program to identify problems, pursue resolution and that overall investigation quality improved. However, he noted that the corrective action backlog remained a challenge.

In addition to the normal inspection program in the areas of operations, maintenance, engineering and plant support, the NRC will perform three additional inspections at the initiative of the Region I office. One of the inspections is in the area of on-line maintenance activity planning and implementation. Another will review the resolution of longstanding system design and performance problems. Finally, an inspection is planned to look at the area of work control and outage preparation.

The text of the plant performance review letter is available from the NRC Region I Office of Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr>.

NRC reviews safety performance twice a year at every licensed nuclear power plant in the nation. These reviews, called plant performance reviews (PPR), give the agency staff an integrated assessment of plant performance and provide a basis for planning inspection activities.

Plant performance reviews are an interim measure NRC is utilizing to monitor nuclear power plant safety. The agency began using it for this purpose after suspending the Systematic Assessment of License Performance (SALP) process until a new oversight and assessment program is developed. Previously, SALP reports had been issued every 12 to 24 months.

The new reactor oversight and assessment program being developed will provide quarterly performance reports, based on a number of performance indicators and on inspection findings. This program will be tested at eight sites beginning in June and will be extended to all plants next January. A full description of the new program is available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>.

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