



NRC NEWS

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NRC STAFF TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING MAY 24 IN JENSEN BEACH TO DISCUSS CHANGES IN OVERSIGHT FOR THE ST. LUCIE PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a public meeting May 24 to discuss its revised reactor inspection and assessment program for Florida Power & Light's St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant near Jensen Beach, Florida.

The meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Holiday Inn at Jensen Beach, and NRC officials will describe the new program which began at the plant in April after being tested at 13 reactors across the country starting last May. Members of the public will be able to ask questions during the meeting.

The new oversight process uses more objective, timely, and safety-significant criteria in assessing performance, while seeking to regulate the nuclear industry more effectively and efficiently. It also takes into account improvements in nuclear industry performance over the past twenty years.

Under the new oversight program, inspections by NRC resident inspectors and regional office based personnel are supplemented by statistical measures of plant activities called performance indicators. These performance indicators measure important safety aspects, including the viability of redundant safety systems, emergency planning, radiation protection, and security.

Inspection findings and performance indicators for each nuclear power plant are posted on the NRC's Web site every three months. The safety significance level of each inspection finding or performance indicator is characterized by color -- green, white, yellow, or red.

NRC response to inspection findings and performance indicators will be based on the color. A green finding would receive normal NRC oversight, while white, yellow, or red assessments would receive increasing NRC attention. Multiple red findings could result in a required plant shutdown.

Current performance information for the two units at the St. Lucie plant is available on the NRC Web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/STL1/stl1_chart.html for Unit 1 and www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/STL2/stl2_chart.html for Unit 2.

A plain language summary of the new inspection and assessment program is available from the NRC Office of Public Affairs or on the Web site at: www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm