



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS ON ROBINSON NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold public meetings on Wednesday, September 25, in Hartsville, South Carolina, on the environmental review related to the application of Progress Energy to renew the operating license for the nuclear unit at the H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant near Hartsville. Members of the public are invited to attend and comment on environmental issues the NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

The meetings will be held in Davidson Hall on the campus of Coker College, 300 East College Avenue in Hartsville. Parking will be available in front of Davidson Hall. There will be two similar sessions, one in the afternoon at 1:30 and one in the evening at 7:00. In addition, the NRC staff will host informal discussions one hour prior to each meeting. NRC staff members will be available to answer questions and provide additional information about the process during those informal sessions, but no comment submittals on environmental issues will be accepted then.

For planning purposes, those who wish to attend or present oral comments at the meetings may register by contacting Richard Emch of the NRC by telephone at (800) 368-5642, extension 1590, or by e-mail at RobinsonEIS@nrc.gov no later than September 20. Interested persons may also register to speak before the start of each session. Individual comment time may be limited by the time available.

The meetings will include an overview and NRC staff presentation on the environmental process related to license renewal, after which members of the public will be given the opportunity to present their comments on what environmental issues the NRC should consider during its review.

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant is issued for up to 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating license for the Robinson plant will expire on July 31, 2010. Progress Energy submitted its application for license renewal in June.

As part of its application, Progress Energy submitted an environmental report. That report is available for public review in the NRC Public Document Room at NRC headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. In addition, the Hartsville Memorial Library, located at 147 West College Avenue in Hartsville, has agreed to make the ER available for public inspection. The application and environmental report are available on the NRC Web page at www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/robinson.html.

An existing NRC document, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants," (NUREG-1437), assesses the scope and impact of environmental effects that would be associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site. The NRC staff is gathering information at these meetings for a supplement to the generic environmental impact statement that will be specific to the Robinson plant. It will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability of the license renewal action.

At the conclusion of the information-gathering process, the NRC staff will prepare a summary of conclusions and significant issues and will send a copy to interested persons who participated in the scoping process. The summary will also be available for public review at the Hartsville Memorial Library and will be accessible electronically through the NRC Public Electronic Reading Room found at www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html.

The NRC staff will then prepare a draft environmental impact statement supplement for public comment and will hold a public meeting to solicit comments. After consideration of comments received on the draft, the NRC will prepare a final EIS supplement.

Members of the public may also submit written comments on the scope of the Robinson-specific supplement to the generic environmental impact statement. Comments should be submitted by October 25, either by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop T-6-D-59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001 or by Internet to: RobinsonEIS@nrc.gov.

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