



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS -- REGION I

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NRC ISSUES FINDING OF LOW TO MODERATE SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE TO CALVERT CLIFFS NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a "white" finding to the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant for an issue involving the plant's emergency sirens. The NRC considers the issue to be of low to moderate importance to safety but one which may require additional NRC inspections.

Calvert Cliffs, a twin-reactor plant located in Lusby, Md., is operated by Constellation Generation Group.

In November of last year, Constellation informed the NRC that 49 sirens located in Calvert County, Md., were not capable of being activated in a timely manner from August 14 to November 5, 2001. An icon on computers in the 911 center for Calvert County had been removed from screens. Without the icon, the alert and notification system was disabled and could not be activated in a timely manner. NRC regulations require that members of the public within the emergency planning zone be notified within about 15 minutes from the time that State and local officials are notified of an emergency condition.

Using the agency's significance determination process, NRC officials classify certain findings at nuclear power plants as being one of four colors which delineate increasing levels of safety significance, beginning with "green" and progressing to "white," "yellow" or "red."

In an August 12 letter to Constellation, the NRC preliminarily classified the finding as white and offered the company an opportunity to meet with the NRC to discuss it. The company did not contest the characterization of the risk significance and declined the opportunity for a regulatory conference to discuss the issue or to respond in writing.

The company also was cited for a violation of NRC requirements involving the same issue and has 30 days to respond to the notice of violation.

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