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NRC STAFF SEEKS INPUT ON QUAD CITIES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT FOR LICENSE RENEWAL

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will hold two public meetings on December 16 in Moline, Illinois, to discuss the preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts that would preclude the renewal of the operating license for Quad Cities Nuclear Power Plant. The facility, located in Cordova, Illinois, is operated by Exelon Generation Company.

The environmental impacts information is contained in a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposed license renewal. The draft EIS is open for public comment until January 27, 2004.

The first session will be held at 1:30 p.m. and the second session will be at 7 p.m. at The Mark of the Quad Cities, 1201 River Drive, Moline. The two sessions will begin with identical overviews, including a presentation by NRC staff and its contractors on the contents of the draft EIS. The public will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments at the end of each session.

In addition, the NRC staff will host informal discussions one hour prior to each meeting to answer questions and provide additional information about the license renewal process, but no comment submittals on environmental issues will be accepted during this time.

The NRC has been reviewing the application for extension of the Quad Cities license since Exelon filed it in January. 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 license for Quad Cities will expire on December 14, 2012.

The possible environmental effects of an additional 20 years of nuclear plant operation are described in the NRC's Generic Environmental Impact Statement, or GEIS (NUREG-1437). The NRC issues a site-specific supplement to the GEIS on each plant requesting license renewal to address the potential environmental impacts. Issues specific to Quad Cities are addressed in Supplement 16. The NRC staff's preliminary recommendation is that the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for Quad Cities are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal would be unreasonable.

Written comments on the draft supplement to the GEIS should be submitted 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, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to QuadCitiesEIS@nrc.gov.

The draft supplement to the GEIS, along with other related documents, is available for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room at NRC headquarters, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. It is also available electronically on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1437/supplement16/index.html>. In addition, the Cordova District Library, 402 Main Avenue, Cordova, Illinois; the River Valley Library, 214 South Main Street, Port Byron, Illinois; and the Davenport Public Library, 321 Main Street, Davenport, Illinois, have agreed to make the draft supplement to the GEIS available for public inspection.

At the conclusion of the public comment period on January 27, the NRC staff will consider and address the comments provided and issue a final supplement to the GEIS. That supplement will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability of license renewal.

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