



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

www.nrc.gov

No. I-04-011

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March 17, 2004

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF JAMES A. FITZPATRICK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Entergy Nuclear Northeast on Thursday, March 25, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the James A. FitzPatrick nuclear power plant. Entergy operates the plant, which is located in Scriba, N.Y.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. at the plant's Emergency Operations Facility/Joint News Center, 2262 N.Y. State Route 176 in Fulton, N.Y. Before the session is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the plant's safety performance, as well as the role of the NRC in ensuring safe operation of the facility.

The performance period to be discussed is January 1 to December 31, 2003. In addition, NRC staff will provide a brief overview of how the agency's Reactor Oversight Process works.

A letter sent from the NRC Region I Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at:

www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/fitz_2003q4.pdf .

Overall, the FitzPatrick plant operated safely and met all cornerstone objectives during the period. (Cornerstones are measures of plant performance.) Therefore, at this time the NRC plans to conduct only baseline inspections at the site through September 30, 2005.

With regard to security issues, the letter points out that the NRC has issued several orders and threat advisories to enhance security capabilities and improve guard force readiness since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The agency has also conducted inspections to review the implementation of these requirements and has monitored the action of plant operators in response to changing threat conditions. "For calendar year 2004, we plan to continue

inspections of order implementation combined with newly developed portions of the security baseline inspection program,” the letter states.

Current performance information for the FitzPatrick plant is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/FITZ/fitz_chart.html .

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