



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF BEAVER VALLEY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company on Thursday, March 25, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Beaver Valley nuclear power plant. The twin-reactor facility is located in Shippingport, Pa., and operated by FirstEnergy.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. at the Emergency Response Facility at the plant, on Route 168. 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 an 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/bv_2003q4.pdf.

Overall, the Beaver Valley 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.

The plant did have a "white" inspection finding, or a finding of low to moderate safety significance, in the second quarter of 2003. It involved a failure to have adequate and timely emergency response staffing in four key functional areas at all times. However, a supplemental inspection completed by the NRC in November 2003 determined that corrective actions taken by FirstEnergy to resolve the issue and prevent a recurrence were satisfactory.

With regard to security issues, 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 Beaver Valley Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BV1/bv1_chart.html .

Current performance information for Beaver Valley Unit 2 is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BV2/bv2_chart.html .

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