



NRC NEWS

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO MEET WITH NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE OF COOPER NUCLEAR STATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of the Nebraska Public Power District on Tuesday, April 6, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Cooper Nuclear Station. The facility is located near Brownville, NB.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the Brownville Concert Hall, Atlantic Avenue and Second Street, in Brownville. The public is invited to observe the meeting and NRC officials will be available before the conclusion of the meeting to answer questions from the public on the safety performance of the plant.

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

A letter from the NRC to Nebraska Public Power District officials addresses the performance of the plant during this period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/cns_2003q4.pdf.

Overall, the plant operated safely during the past year. On January 30, 2003, the NRC issued a Confirmatory Action Letter to Nebraska Public Power District to confirm commitments made by the licensee to address long-standing performance deficiencies. Cooper has corrected weaknesses in its emergency preparedness program and is working on improving the performance of plant workers, the identification and correction of plant problems, and the condition and reliability of plant equipment. The NRC will continue to monitor the licensee's actions in these areas.

During the fourth quarter of 2003, Cooper exceeded an NRC threshold for the number of unplanned plant shutdowns. The NRC plans to conduct a supplemental inspection to review actions taken by the licensee to address this issue. In addition, it is monitoring steps taken by the licensee to address an unusually high re-qualification exam failure rate by licensed plant operators.

Current performance indicators for Cooper Nuclear Station are available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CNS/cns_chart.html .

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