



NRC NEWS

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CONTACT: Ken Clark (404)562-4416
Roger Hannah (404)562-4417

E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC TO MEET WITH SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS SAFETY PERFORMANCE AT VOGTLE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with Southern Nuclear Operating Company officials on Thursday, April 1, to discuss the results of NRC's annual assessment of safety performance at the Vogtle nuclear power plant near Waynesboro, Georgia, about 30 miles south of Augusta.

The meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. at the Vogtle Training Center, 9034 River Road, in Waynesboro. The public is invited to observe the meeting, and NRC officials will be available before the conclusion of the meeting to answer any questions.

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 from the NRC to Southern Nuclear addresses plant safety performance during the previous year and forms the basis for the meeting discussions. It says that Vogtle has operated safely and that plant performance was at a level requiring no additional NRC inspection beyond normal. The letter, which is available from Region II Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/vog_2003q4.pdf, says the NRC staff will continue inspections of the plant's implementation of NRC security advisories and Orders and will evaluate compliance with new security requirements that may be ordered.

In addition to routine inspections, the agency will also conduct inspections on the reactor pressure vessel head, upper and lower head penetration nozzles, reactor containment sump blockage and spent fuel material control and accounting.

On October 16 of last year, company officials submitted a request to combine the emergency operating facilities for plants Vogtle, Hatch and Farley. The NRC has made arrangements for a demonstration next July 14 of the centralized facility's capabilities which will include supporting exercises at Plant Farley and Plant Hatch. NRC officials said the exercises will not be evaluated as part of the agency's reactor oversight program but will be evaluated to determine whether or not to approve the request.

Current performance indicators for the two units at the Vogtle plant are available at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/VOG1/vog1_chart.html and www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/VOG2/vog2_chart.html

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