



NRC NEWS

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Region IV
611 Ryan Plaza Drive - Suite 400
Arlington, TX 76011-4005

No. IV-04-014
Contact: Victor Dricks
Phone: 817-860-8128

March 24, 2004
E-Mail: opa4@nrc.gov

NRC TO MEET WITH ENTERGY OPERATIONS, INC. TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE OF RIVER BEND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Entergy Operations, Inc., on Tuesday, April 13, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the River Bend nuclear plant. The facility is located near St. Francisville, Louisiana.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, Jackson Hall, 11621 Ferdinand Street, St. Francisville. 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 March 3 letter from the NRC to Entergy Operations officials addresses the performance of the plant during this period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/rbs_2003q4.pdf.

Overall, the plant operated safely last year, and fully met all cornerstone objectives (cornerstones are measures of plant performance). However, during the fourth quarter of 2003, the NRC staff identified one finding of low to moderate safety significance. It involved a failure to properly lock open a valve that complicated an automatic reactor shutdown in September 2002. The NRC staff has concluded that the licensee has adequately identified the root cause and taken appropriate corrective actions to prevent a recurrence.

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. The NRC will continue security inspections during 2004.

Current performance indicators for the River Bend nuclear plant are available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/RBS1/rbs1_chart.html .

###