



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SEABROOK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of FPL Energy Seabrook, LLC, on Monday, April 12, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Seabrook nuclear power plant. FPL operates the plant, which is located in Seabrook, N.H.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. at the Hampshire Inn, 20 Spur Road (Route 107) in Seabrook. 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/seab_2003q4.pdf .

Overall, the Seabrook plant operated safely and met all cornerstone objectives during the period. (Cornerstones are measures of plant performance.) However, based on a "white" Performance Indicator for reactor coolant system leakage during the fourth quarter of 2003, the plant will receive some additional oversight. The Performance Indicator was exceeded as a result of a reactor coolant system flow instrument leak that took place on November 11, 2003. The leak was halted early the next day when plant operators closed valves to isolate it. In response to the change in the Performance Indicator, the NRC will conduct a supplemental inspection at the plant in May to review corrective actions related to the problem. Other than that inspection, the NRC will conduct baseline-level inspections at the plant.

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. The NRC will continue security inspections during 2004.

Current performance information for the Seabrook plant is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/SEAB1/seab1_chart.html.

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