



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of AmerGen Energy Company, LLC, on Thursday, April 15, to discuss the results of the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant. The plant is located in Lacey Township, N.J., and operated by AmerGen.

The meeting, which will be open to the public for observation, is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. at the Lacey Township Municipal Building, 818 W. Lacey Road in Lacey. 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/oc_2003q4.pdf .

Overall, the Oyster Creek plant operated safely and met all cornerstone objectives during the period. (Cornerstones are program areas where NRC measures plant safety performance.) As a result of a recently finalized "white" inspection finding stemming from an electrical cable failure at the plant, the NRC will conduct a supplemental inspection to review the company's root cause analysis and corrective actions related to the problem. Otherwise, the NRC plans to perform baseline-level inspections at the facility through Sept. 30, 2005.

The NRC has closed a previous cross-cutting issue identified in the mid-cycle 2003 letter regarding the plant. The issue was in the area of human performance and involved lapses in following procedures. While the agency does not plan further reviews in this area, it will continue to monitor progress through the baseline inspection program.

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 Oyster Creek plant is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OC/oc_chart.html .

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