



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS AT SALEM AND HOPE CREEK NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

Managers from Public Service Electric and Gas (PSEG), the operator of the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear power plants, will meet with Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff on Dec. 2 to review the company's ongoing efforts to improve the work environment at the site. The plants are located in Hancocks Bridge (Salem County), N.J.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. at the Bridgeview Inn (formerly a Ramada Inn), at 1612 N. DuPont Highway in New Castle, Del. The hotel is located adjacent to the intersection of Interstate 295 and U.S. 13 North. Directions are available at: http://www.bridgeviewinn.com/Maps_Directions.htm.

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting. Following the discussion of issues between NRC staff and PSEG representatives, NRC staff will answer questions posed by the public.

Among the areas to be discussed at the meeting are: the fostering of a safety conscious work environment, or an environment conducive to the raising and addressing of safety issues; problem identification and resolution; adherence to procedures and other elements of human performance; the quality of engineering products, particularly as they relate to the evaluation of degraded equipment and associated operational decision-making; and the role and function of quality assurance at the site. These areas were specifically identified in a July 30th letter from the NRC to PSEG regarding work environment issues at the Salem and Hope Creek plants, as well as in an Aug. 30th letter from the NRC to the company addressing the agency's mid-year assessment of performance at the facility.

The Dec. 2nd meeting is consistent with a commitment made by PSEG earlier this year to keep the NRC updated on its performance improvement initiatives and their results.

"The NRC has conducted numerous on-site reviews and continues to closely track progress toward resolving work environment issues at the Salem and Hope Creek plants," NRC Region I Administrator Samuel Collins said. "This meeting provides us with an opportunity for a public update on the status of the efforts being made to address these concerns."

Background information on the Salem and Hope Creek work environment issues was previously available on the NRC web site in the ADAMS electronic document system, under Accession Number ML040610856. The web address for the ADAMS system is www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html . That system is temporarily unavailable to the public while the agency reviews publicly available documents to ensure that potentially sensitive information is removed from the web site. However, the Salem and Hope Creek documents will be accessible through the system upon its restoration. In addition, hard copies of the documents will be available at the Dec. 2 meeting.

The NRC staff plans to conduct a separate meeting with PSEG to discuss its review of, and corrective actions for, a steam line failure and shutdown with complications that occurred at Hope Creek on Oct. 10, as well as other issues that have emerged during the current refueling and maintenance outage for that unit. That meeting will take place prior to the restart of Hope Creek. Once that meeting is formally scheduled, details will be provided in an NRC press release and on the agency's web site at www.nrc.gov .

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