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NRC NEWS

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NRC ANNOUNCES TEAM, SCHEDULE FOR ENGINEERING INSPECTION AT VERMONT YANKEE

Starting August 9, a team of eight inspectors from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, including three contractors, will spend three weeks at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon, Vt., performing an engineering design inspection.

The inspection, part of an NRC effort to enhance the Reactor Oversight Process, will also provide information relevant to reviewing Entergy Nuclear's application to increase the plant's power output by 20 percent. The team will devote more than 700 inspection hours towards identifying any latent issues in the plant's design, focusing on those components and systems important to safety, including some impacted by the proposed power uprate. The NRC expects to hold a public meeting in September to discuss the inspection results.

None of the NRC employees on the team has been involved in Vermont Yankee oversight in at least the past two years, and none of the private contractors has been employed by Entergy Nuclear in at least the past two years. The NRC is closely coordinating the inspection with the State of Vermont. Vermont state's Nuclear Engineer, Bill Sherman, will observe the inspection.

"Based on the team's qualifications and demonstrated ability to identify issues on previous inspections, I'm confident this team will perform a rigorous inspection at Vermont Yankee," said Jim Dyer, Director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) at NRC headquarters.

The team leader is the NRC's Jeffery Jacobson, a Program Manager in NRR's Inspection Program Branch. He has led inspection teams numerous times during his 19 years with the agency, including several that raised significant safety issues. He is currently the overall project lead for the NRC's pilot engineering design inspection program. Jacobson earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Virginia Tech, and a Master of Science degree in Technical Management from John Hopkins University.

The other team members are:

Fred Bower, currently a Senior Reactor Inspector in the Division of Reactor Safety for the Mechanical Engineering from Virginia Tech, and a Masters degree in Engineering Management from

Old Dominion University.

Steven Dennis is a Senior Operations Engineer in Region I's Division of Reactor Safety, and has held a variety of positions in Region I and NRR during his eight years at the NRC. Prior to joining the agency, he worked 12 years at the Hope Creek nuclear power plant, including as an NRC-licensed Reactor Operator and Senior Reactor Operator. Dennis earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Science and Technology from Thomas Edison State College, and served for seven years in the U. S. Navy's nuclear propulsion program.

Gregory Bowman is a Reactor Inspector in Region I's Division of Reactor Safety, and joined the NRC in October of 2002. Prior to that, he worked for five years with Bechtel-Bettis in Goose Creek, S.C., training students for the Navy's nuclear propulsion program. Bowman earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Virginia.

Michelle Snell is also a Reactor Inspector in Region I's Division of Reactor Projects, and joined the NRC in November 2003. Prior to that she worked as a nuclear core manager/designer for Exelon Nuclear, and completed internships in nuclear engineering at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden, and the NRC. Snell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nuclear Engineering from North Carolina State University.

George Skinner is a independent electrical engineer with 26 years of experience in the nuclear power industry, including 13 years of consulting and technical assessments on electrical and instrument and control systems. Skinner earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Missouri, and is a registered Professional Engineer in the state of Pennsylvania.

Stanley Spiegelman is a mechanical engineer with 37 years of experience in the nuclear power industry. He is currently president of The Churchill Associates in Pittsburgh, where he has worked since 1997 providing a variety of engineering consulting services to clients, and he holds five U.S. patents. Spiegelman earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Drexel University, and is a registered Professional Engineer in the state of Pennsylvania.

Craig Baron is a mechanical engineer with 24 years of experience in the nuclear power industry. For the past six years he has provided engineering consulting services to various clients. Prior to that he spent 18 years working on several engineering service and support assignments at various nuclear power facilities for the Stone and Webster Engineering Corporation. Baron earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Rhode Island, and a Masters of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Colorado at Denver. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the states of Colorado, Nebraska, and Washington.

The NRC will not approve the Vermont Yankee uprate, or any proposed changes to a reactor's license, unless the agency can conclude the changes can be implemented safely. Additional information on Vermont Yankee is available on the NRC web site at this address: http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/vermont-yankee-issues.html .

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