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IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS AT SALEM, HOPE CREEK NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NRC MEETING SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 17

Actions taken by PSEG Nuclear, LLC, to improve the safety conscious work environment at the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear power plants will be the primary subject of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission public meeting on Thursday, Nov. 17. In addition, NRC staff and plant managers will discuss PSEG efforts to improve performance in the area of problem identification and resolution at the facilities, which are located in Hancocks Bridge (Salem County), N.J.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. at the Bridgeport Holiday Inn, at One Pureland Drive in Swedesboro, N.J. The hotel is located off Exit 10 of Interstate 295. Members of the public will be able to observe the NRC-PSEG discussions. Before the session is adjourned, NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public regarding the topics.

Safety conscious work environment refers to maintaining an environment in which workers feel free to raise safety concerns. In the NRC mid-cycle assessment of the Salem and Hope Creek units issued earlier this year, the agency stated that a cross-cutting issue in the area of safety conscious work environment would remain open until PSEG has concluded that substantial, sustainable progress has been made. Further, the NRC will need to complete a review confirming PSEG's assessment results. (A cross-cutting issue is one that affects several different areas of performance.)

The mid-cycle assessment also determined that a cross-cutting issue in the area of problem identification and resolution for the plants would remain open. This was based on additional inspection findings and documented shortcomings in this area in 2004.

Under a Deviation Memo approved in late July, the NRC is continuing to devote additional resources to reviewing performance at the plants.

“The upcoming meeting will provide a good opportunity for us to discuss whether the company's efforts are yielding the kind of meaningful and lasting results that are needed,” NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. “Until that occurs, we intend to maintain additional oversight at the Salem and Hope Creek plants involving, among other things, enhanced baseline inspections, regular reviews of the company's plans and periodic management meetings like the one scheduled for November 17th.”

More information about the NRC's oversight of the plants is available on the agency's web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/hope-creek-salem-issues.html> .

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