



NRC NEWS

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2005 PERFORMANCE AT CRYSTAL RIVER NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is scheduled to meet with Progress Energy officials on Tuesday, April 11, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance last year at the Crystal River nuclear power plant, located on the west coast of Florida about 80 miles north of Tampa.

The meeting, which is open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Crystal River Nuclear Operations Training Facility, 8200 West Venable Street. The NRC staff will present the results of the assessment and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public before the close of the meeting.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Crystal River plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region II Administrator William Travers said. "This meeting is a chance for us to discuss that safety performance with the company, with local officials and with people living near the plant."

A letter sent from the NRC Region II 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/cr_2005q4.pdf.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," depending on the safety significance of the issues involved.

The NRC said the Crystal River plant operated safely during 2005 with all inspection findings being "green," or very low safety significance, and all performance indicators also indicating performance at levels requiring no additional NRC oversight during the first, second and fourth quarters. However, during the third quarter of 2005, the NRC identified a "white" fire protection issue involving cables and manual operator actions to deal with certain scenarios that were found to be unfeasible. Progress Energy took corrective actions and a supplemental inspection in January of this year found no further significant issues.

As a result, the NRC plans to conduct only routine baseline inspections at the plant during 2006. The NRC staff will also perform a non-routine inspection of a generic concern at pressurized water reactors related to possible blockage of containment building sumps.

Routine inspections are performed by NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region II Office in Atlanta, and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md.

Current information for the Crystal River plant is available on the NRC web site at:
www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/CR3/cr3_chart.html .

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