



NRC NEWS

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ORAL COMMENTS TO BE ACCEPTED ON JUNE 26 AND 27 REGARDING PROCEEDING ON VERMONT YANKEE POWER UPRATE

Individuals who are not a party to the Atomic Safety & Licensing Board Panel (ASLBP) hearing regarding the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant power uprate will have an opportunity to offer comments on matters of concern related to the proceeding on Monday, June 26, and Tuesday, June 27. The remarks, which will be transcribed, will be received by the three-member ASLBP handling the hearing.

Known as "limited appearance statements," the comments will be accepted from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., as needed, on June 26 at the Latchis Theatre, at 50 Main St. in Brattleboro, Vt. (Directions are available on the theatre's web site at: <http://www.latchis.com/location.html>.) They will also be accepted at the same location from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1:30 to 4 p.m., as needed, on June 27.

"The purpose of the limited appearance statements is to allow members of the public to alert the Board and the parties to areas relating to the uprate and the admitted contentions in which evidence may need to be adduced (brought forward), and to assist the Board in its consideration of these issues," a notice on the sessions issued by the ASLBP states.

Persons wishing to make an oral statement who have submitted a timely written request to do so will be given priority when it comes to the speaking order at the sessions. To be considered timely, a written request must either be e-mailed, faxed or sent by regular mail so as to be received by 5 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, June 20. Requests can be e-mailed to: hearingdocket@nrc.gov; faxed to: (301) 415-1101; or mailed to: Office of the Secretary, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001. Copies of requests should be e-mailed to: jmr3@nrc.gov and kvs@nrc.gov; faxed to: (301) 415-5599; or mailed to: Alex S. Karlin, Chairman, c/o: Jonathan Rund, Esq., Law Clerk, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, Mail Stop T-3 E2C, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001.

In September 2003, Entergy Nuclear applied to the NRC for a 20-percent power uprate for Vermont Yankee, which is located in Vernon, Vt. Subsequently, the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS) and the New England Coalition (NEC), a public interest group, filed requests for a

hearing on the proposal. An ASLBP was formed to hear the requests and ruled in November 2004 that the DPS and NEC had established standing and that each had submitted admissible contentions.

On March 2, 2006, the NRC staff announced that it had approved the power uprate after more than two years and more than 11,000 staff-hours of review.

The Vermont DPS notified the ASLBP on May 2, 2006, of its intention to withdraw from the hearing and seek dismissal of its contentions. The ASLBP has since granted that request.

As such, there are currently two NEC contentions still under consideration in the hearing process. One has to do with large transient testing as a condition of the power uprate; the other pertains to the ability of the plant's cooling towers to withstand an earthquake and other natural phenomena without loss of capability to perform its safety functions at the higher power level.

In addition to receiving limited appearance statements, the board intends to conduct an evidentiary hearing on the remaining contentions. That hearing will take place during the weeks of Sept. 11 and Oct. 16 at a location still to be determined.

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