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NRC, FIRSTENERGY TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATION AT BEAVER VALLEY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. on Tuesday, Oct. 24, to discuss an apparent violation identified during an emergency preparedness exercise conducted earlier this year at the Beaver Valley nuclear power plant. The apparent violation involves ineffective corrective actions for an exercise weakness identified in 2004 regarding the performance of the plant's dose assessment team.

The regulatory conference is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. at the NRC's Region I Office, 475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. (Directions to the office are available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/who-we-are/locations/region1.html>.) Members of the public can attend the meeting and will have an opportunity to ask questions of the NRC staff prior to adjournment.

FirstEnergy operates the two-reactor plant, which is located in Shippingport (Beaver County), Pa. NRC inspectors determined that during an emergency preparedness exercise at Beaver Valley on June 27, the company team assigned the task of calculating the amount of radioactivity that would be released during the hypothetical accident scenario did not develop the best dose projection estimate achievable at the time. This finding was similar to an NRC-identified weakness exhibited by company personnel during a May 2004 emergency exercise at the facility.

"The finding appears to have low to moderate safety significance because not adequately correcting the [plant's] process for dose projection may adversely impact the timeliness and adequacy of Protective Action Recommendations made in the event of a radiological release" from the plant, the NRC inspection report on the exercise stated.

The inspection report is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), under accession number ML062620341. ADAMS is accessible via the agency's web site at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html. Help in using ADAMS is available by contacting the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR@NRC.GOV.

At the regulatory conference, FirstEnergy will be able to present additional information regarding the apparent violation and discuss any corrective actions.

No decision will be made during the meeting. Rather, the NRC will consider the information presented and render a decision sometime following the conference.

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