



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2007 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR BRAIDWOOD NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of Exelon Generation Company on Monday, June 23, to discuss the agency's assessment of the safety performance during 2007 at the Braidwood Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located in Braidwood, Ill.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. CDT at the Reed-Custer High School Auditorium, 249 Comet Drive, in Braidwood. The NRC staff will present the results of the assessment, talk about the NRC and its range of activities, and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public about the NRC and its oversight of the Braidwood Station before the close of the meeting.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the Braidwood plant and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region III Administrator James Caldwell said. "This meeting allows us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and area residents. Our goal is to explain how the NRC works and make sure as much information as possible is available on our regulation of these facilities."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III Office to plant officials addresses Braidwood's performance and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/listofasmrpt.html>.

The NRC's assessment concluded that the Braidwood plant operated safely during the period. 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," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

All performance indicators for Braidwood during 2007 were determined to be “green.” Performance indicators are a statistical measurement of plant and equipment performance.

In the first quarter of 2007, there was one “white” finding meaning it had low to moderate significance to safety in the area of radiation safety. This finding was related to the failure to perform adequate and timely radiological evaluations following historical unplanned radioactive leaks from the station’s blow-down line vacuum breakers.

In January 2007, the NRC conducted an inspection to review the actions taken by the utility to address the radiation protection deficiency. The inspection focused on reviewing the utility’s identification of the root and contributing causes of the issue, the thoroughness of the utility’s review of the extent of the problem and the effectiveness of corrective actions to address these causes and to prevent recurrence. The NRC concluded that the company’s review of the issue and the corrective actions were adequate.

Based on this performance, the NRC will conduct the normal, baseline level of inspections during the upcoming year.

Routine inspections are performed by two NRC resident inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill. Among the areas of plant operations to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are radiation protection, fire protection, conditions of welds and engineering modifications.

Current performance information for Braidwood is available on the NRC’s web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BRAI1/brai1_chart.html for Unit 1 and http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/BRAI2/brai2_chart.html for Unit 2.

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