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NRC ISSUES FINAL SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT FOR VOGTLE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued its final safety evaluation report (SER) for the proposed renewal of the operating licenses for the Vogtle Electrical Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2. The report concludes that there are no safety concerns that would preclude license renewal because the applicant has effectively demonstrated the capability to manage the effects of plant aging during extended operations and it would not pose an undue risk to the health and safety of workers or the public.

Vogtle Units 1 and 2 are pressurized-water reactors located about 26 miles southeast of Augusta, Ga. Vogtle's operator, Southern Nuclear Operating Co., submitted the license renewal application June 29, 2007. The current operating licenses expire Jan. 16, 2027, for Unit 1 and Feb. 9, 2029, for Unit 2. Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. Therefore, the operating license would be extended until Jan. 16, 2047, for Unit 1 and Feb. 9, 2049 for Unit 2.

The SER documents the results of the NRC staff's review of the license renewal application and site audits of Vogtle's aging management programs to address the safety of plant operations during the period of extended operation. Overall, the results show that Southern Nuclear Operating Co has identified actions that have been or will be taken to manage the effects of aging in the appropriate safety systems, structures and components of the plant and that their functions will be maintained during the period of extended operation.

Afterwards, the NRC's independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) will evaluate the report and make its recommendation before the agency makes a final decision on the renewal of the license.

The ACRS will hold meetings that are open to public participation. The meetings will take place at NRC Headquarters in Rockville, Md. on April 2. The meeting will be announced on the agency's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/index.cfm>. The full ACRS will later issue a report discussing the final results of its review.

A copy of the SER will be available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management Systems (ADAMS) under accession number ML090710010 . ADAMS is accessible via the agency's Web site at: <http://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.Resource@NRC.GOV.

Documents related to Vogtle are also located at the Burke County Library, 130 Highway 24 S., Waynesboro, Ga.

Additional information concerning license renewal in general and the Vogtle application in particular can be found at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/license-renewal-bg.html> and <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html> respectively.

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