



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND DRAFT SAFETY EVALUATION FOR SUSQUEHANNA NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has completed its final environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2, and concluded that there are no environmental impacts that would preclude license renewal for an additional 20 years of operation. The staff has also issued a safety evaluation report (SER) that documents the interim results of the NRC staff's review of the license renewal application and site audits of Susquehanna's aging management programs to address the safety of plant operations during the period of extended operations. Overall, the interim results show that PPL 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.

Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 are boiling-water reactors, located seven miles northeast of Berwick, Pa. The current operating licenses for Units 1 and 2 expire July 17, 2022, and March 23, 2024, respectively. 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 Unit 1 to July 17, 2042; and for Unit 2 to March 23, 2044. PPL Susquehanna, LLC, plant owners and operators, submitted an application for renewal of its licenses to the NRC on Sept. 13, 2006.

As part of its environmental review of the application, the NRC held public meetings near the plant to discuss the scope of the review and the draft version of the environmental impact statement. Comments were received and considered from members of the public, local officials, and representatives of state and federal agencies.

In a letter dated March 13, Brian Holian, director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation's Division of License Renewal, provided PPL with the SER and requested comments by May 3, 2009. The SER is available on NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications.html>. The NRC staff will present its final conclusions on the license renewal application in an update to this SER. NRC reviewers expect to finalize the SER by August.

The SER and the license renewal application have also been provided to the NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), an independent body of experts that advises the NRC on reactor safety matters. An ACRS subcommittee is expected to discuss the SER during a meeting in April. The meeting, which will take place at NRC Headquarters in Rockville, Md., will be open to the public and 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 results of its review.

Afterwards, the full ACRS will evaluate final reports and make its recommendation before the agency makes a final decision on the renewal of the license.

The Final EIS and SER will be available electronically in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management Systems (ADAMS) under accession number ML090700454 and ML090630309 respectively. 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.

A copy of the Susquehanna license renewal application is available via the NRC's web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/susquehanna.html>. Additional information on the NRC's license renewal review process is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html> and <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/license-renewal-bg.html>.

In addition, copies of the reports will be available for review at the McBride Memorial Library, 500 N. Market St., Berwick, and at the Mill Memorial Library, 495 E. Main St., Nanticoke, Pa.

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