



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO CONDUCT OPEN HOUSE ON MARCH 25 REGARDING ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE FOR R.E. GINNA NUCLEAR PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct an informational open house on Wednesday, March 25, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the R.E. Ginna nuclear power plant.

The open house, which will run from 3 to 5 p.m. at Ontario Town Hall, 1850 Ridge Road, Ontario, N.Y., will provide members of the public with an opportunity to learn first-hand from NRC staff members about performance at the plant during 2008. Unlike the standard meeting format, the setting will allow citizens to discuss plant-related topics on a one-on-one basis with NRC inspectors assigned to the plant and their NRC Region I supervisor.

Ginna is a pressurized-water reactor located in Ontario, N.Y. It is owned and operated by Constellation Energy, LLC.

Overall, Ginna operated safely during 2008. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "green" and no inspection findings that were "greater than green." Therefore, for rest of 2009 Ginna will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well. In 2008, the NRC devoted approximately 5,700 hours of inspection to the Ginna facility.

"In 2008, all but one of the 26 commercial power reactors in Region I, which covers the Northeastern United States, met our clearly defined performance criteria. Ginna was among those plants achieving those objectives. That means those plants will receive the normal level of NRC oversight this year if they continue to meet the high safety benchmarks set out for each site," NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said. "That said, our inspectors will remain on the lookout for any problems or adverse trends that might indicate a change in performance. As always, we will not hesitate to act should we identify any safety concerns."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with “green” and then increase to “white,” “yellow” or “red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a year: During the mid-cycle, or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC’s web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual reports every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The meetings are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment for the Ginna plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/ginn_2008q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML090690527. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by the two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas of performance at Ginna to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, fire protection, emergency preparedness, dry cask storage and license renewal commitments.

Current performance information for Ginna is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/GINN/ginn_chart.html.

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