



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I

2100 Renaissance Blvd., King of Prussia, Pa. 19406-2713

E-mail: opa1@nrc.gov

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

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Contact: Diane Screnci, (610) 337-5330
Neil Sheehan, (610) 337-5331

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Email: opa1.resource@nrc.gov

NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON MARCH 21 IN LIMERICK, PA., TO DISCUSS LIMERICK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public open house on Thursday, March 21 to discuss the agency's Annual Assessment of safety performance at the Limerick nuclear power plant.

During the open house, which is scheduled for 6 to 8 p.m. at the Limerick Township Municipal Building, at 646 W. Ridge Pike in Limerick, Pa., attendees will have an opportunity to hold one-on-one discussions with NRC staff members about the plant's 2012 performance and the agency's oversight of the facility. NRC staff on hand will include the inspectors assigned to the plant on a full-time basis and their supervisor.

Overall, the Limerick plant -- a twin-reactor facility located in Limerick (Montgomery County) and operated by Exelon Nuclear Generation Co., LLC. -- operated safely during 2012. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the facility that were other than "Green" (very low risk) and no inspection findings that were "Greater than Green" (that is, none of the findings exceeded very low safety significance). As a result, Limerick Units 1 and 2 will continue to receive the NRC's normal level of oversight during 2013, barring any changes.

For plants that are meeting criteria set out by the NRC, normal oversight still consists of a detailed regime involving thousands of hours of inspection. In 2012, the agency devoted approximately 6,800 hours of inspection to the Limerick plant.

Limerick Unit 2 received a "White" (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding in the third quarter of 2011 for a failure involving inadequate procedures related to the operation of two main feedwater system valves. The plant received additional NRC scrutiny as a result. However, that finding was closed out in July 2012, with the facility transitioning back to normal NRC oversight.

"When the time comes to evaluate a plant's performance for the previous year, we take a fresh look at any and all issues that might be of concern. We then adjust our plans for assessing the facility accordingly," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "As we map out our

inspection plans for the remainder of 2013, we remain focused on ensuring that safety is the foremost objective for all plant operators.”

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess plant performance. The colors begin with “Green” and then increase to “White,” “Yellow” or “Red,” commensurate with the risk significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at each plant 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 sessions are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with respect to its activities.

The Annual Assessment Letter for the Limerick plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/lim_2012q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML13065A068. ADAMS is available at: <http://adams.nrc.gov/wba/>. 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 to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, fire protection, the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel and underground pipes and tanks. In addition, there will be a follow-up inspection of three or more Severity Level IV Traditional Enforcement violations identified in the same area in a 12-month period at the facility.

Current performance information for Limerick Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LIM1/lim1_chart.html. Current performance information for Limerick Unit 2 is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LIM2/lim2_chart.html.

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