



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2012 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR WOLF CREEK NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet in New Strawn, Kan., on April 18, with representatives of Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corp. to discuss the agency's 2012 assessment of safety performance for the Wolf Creek nuclear plant. The plant is located near Burlington, Kan.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. at the New Strawn Community Center, 319 W. Getz, New Strawn.

In addition to the performance assessment, the NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public on the safety performance of Wolf Creek, as well as the NRC's role in ensuring safe plant operation.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of Wolf Creek and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," NRC Region IV Administrator Arthur T. Howell said. "This meeting will provide an opportunity for a discussion of our annual assessment of safety performance with the company and with local officials and residents who live near the plant."

A letter sent from the NRC Region IV office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during 2012 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/LETTERS/wc_2012q4.pdf .

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. Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance. The NRC's action matrix reflects overall plant performance and agency response. There are five columns in the matrix with Column 1 requiring a baseline level of inspections. A move to the other columns results in an increased level of NRC oversight and inspections. Wolf Creek is in Column 3 of the NRC's action matrix.

Overall, the NRC found that the Wolf Creek operated safely in 2012. The NRC's assessment of the plant's performance included a yellow inspection finding involving the plant staff's failure to provide adequate oversight of contractors while they performed work that could affect safety-related equipment in April 2011, and a white performance indicator because of recurring problems with the plant's emergency diesel generators.

Wolf Creek will continue to receive increased oversight inspection efforts used by the NRC for plants in the degraded performance column. The NRC will also conduct supplemental inspections to follow up on corrective actions, the sustainability of those actions, and verify that plant staff understands the cause of issues in order to prevent reoccurrence

Inspections are performed by NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by specialists from the Region IV Office in Arlington, Texas.

Information about the plant's current performance is available at:
http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WC/wc_chart.html .

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