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CONTACT: Victor Dricks, 817-200-1128

Lara Uselding, 817-200-1519

NRC to Meet with Officials from Wolf Creek Nuclear Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will meet with officials of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corp. on Jan. 22 to discuss the licensee's progress in addressing safety conscious work environment concerns. The plant is located north of Burlington, Kan.

The meeting, which will be open to public observation, will be held from 1-3 p.m. in the NRC's Region IV office at 1600 East Lamar Blvd., Arlington, Texas. Members of the public can also listen to the meeting by calling 1-888-566-5789.

On Aug. 19, 2013, following inspections and interviews with plant workers, the NRC issued [chilling effect letter](#) after determining a "chilled work environment" exists within the Quality Assurance (QA) group at the plant. A chilled work environment is one in which workers are hesitant to raise safety concerns for fear of retaliation.

The company responded with a [letter](#) a month later outlining actions it is taking to address the concerns and ensure they facilitate a strong safety conscious work environment. At the meeting, company officials will provide an update on their progress.

On May 15, 2013, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) found that Enercon, a Wolf Creek contractor, fired a worker for raising concerns with how work was being performed at Wolf Creek.

The NRC considered OSHA's finding and decided to issue the chilling effect letter as the firing might affect the willingness of other workers to speak up on nuclear-related projects at the plant. In order to ensure safe operations at a plant, it is imperative that workers feel encouraged to raise safety concerns.