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NRC Schedules Regulatory Conference to Discuss Apparent Violation at Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with officials from Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E) on Jan. 14 to discuss the safety significance of an apparent violation related to the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant emergency preparedness plan. The plant is located near San Luis Obispo, Calif.

The meeting will be held from 1-4 p.m. Central Time at the NRC's Region IV Offices at 1600 E. Lamar Blvd., in Arlington, Texas. NRC officials will answer questions from the public after the business portion of the conference. A telephone bridge will be available for the meeting by calling 1-888-469-0950 and entering passcode 34924.

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 in order of increasing safety significance. The NRC has preliminarily determined that the severity level III violation has low to moderate safety significance, or is "white."

During an NRC [inspection](#), inspectors identified that the licensee's emergency plan did not include a measure to recommend evacuation of the public for areas over the ocean within the 10-mile emergency planning zone. Upon further review, the inspectors determined that the licensee had changed its procedure without prior NRC approval as is required if a change decreases the effectiveness of those plans. In this case, PG&E did not identify the change as a decrease in effectiveness and therefore did not request NRC approval.

The licensee has resolved this issue and put measures in place to prevent a recurrence. Licensees recommend protective actions to local and state officials, who then make the actual call about what protective actions the public should take. In this case, the county had procedures in place that included evaluating the ocean for evacuation. At no time was the public going to be allowed to stay in an area that had the potential for radioactivity if an event had occurred.

No decision on the final safety significance of the findings or any additional NRC actions will be made at the conference. That decision will be announced at a later date.