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NRC Schedules Public Meeting March 26 to Discuss Performance of Monticello Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting with representatives of Northern States Power Company, Minnesota, on March 26 to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant. The plant is located in Monticello, Minn., approximately 30 miles northwest of Minneapolis.

The meeting is scheduled for 6-8 p.m. at the Monticello Senior High School, 5225 School Blvd., in Monticello. The NRC will present its assessment of the plant's 2014 performance, talk about agency activities, and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors go from "green" to "white," "yellow," and "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issue. Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance. The [NRC's performance 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 another column results in an increased level of NRC oversight and inspections.

The [assessment letter](#) and [deviation memo](#) sent from the NRC Region III office to plant officials address the performance of the plant during 2014 and will serve as the basis for the discussion.

Overall, the NRC found the Monticello facility operated safely last year.

For the first three quarters of 2014, Monticello was in Column 3 of the performance matrix due to a [yellow finding](#) related to weaknesses in the external flooding strategy. On Feb. 26, the NRC issued Monticello a greater than green [security finding](#) identified in the fourth quarter of 2014. While the details of this issue are not publicly available, it is important to note that the plant has corrected the situation. By the NRC's normal process, this finding, aggregated with the yellow finding, would result in Monticello's placement in column 4 in the fourth quarter of last year.

The NRC staff has decided that recent improvements in Monticello's performance do not warrant placing the facility in the category of plants with multiple and systemic performance issues. As of the fourth quarter of 2014, the NRC moved Monticello from column 3 to column 2 of the performance matrix. This decision is based on the results of the NRC's nine-person team [inspection](#)

which demonstrated that the plant has resolved the flooding issue and its broad corrective actions resulted in an overall improvement in plant performance; the positive results of another in-depth [inspection](#), focused on the plant's ability to identify and resolve problems; and the results of routine resident and regional inspections which have also shown continued performance improvement with no recent indications of new, significant problems.

The greater than green security finding warrants a follow-up inspection, which will take place after the plant has had the opportunity to address the causes that resulted in the issue. In addition, the NRC will perform an inspection focused on persistent human performance concerns at the plant.

Inspections are performed by two resident inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md.

The most current [performance information](#) for Monticello is available on the NRC website.