

No: IV-16-001

January 25, 2016

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## NRC To Conduct Comprehensive Inspection at Arkansas Nuclear One

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has begun a comprehensive inspection to assess the depth and breadth of the problems affecting performance at Arkansas Nuclear One, which is receiving the highest level of NRC scrutiny. The plant, in Russellville, Ark., is operated by Entergy Operations.

A team of 25 inspectors will devote about 3,600 hours of effort to independently assess and document the adequacy of Entergy programs and processes used to identify, evaluate and correct performance issues; provide insights into the causes of performance deficiencies; and evaluate the adequacy of a third-party safety culture assessment conducted at the site.

Any deficiencies identified by the team will be discussed with Entergy officials at a public meeting and documented in a written report that will be made publicly available this spring. The NRC will then issue a Confirmatory Action Letter that documents commitments made by the licensee to address any identified deficiencies.

“This inspection is a very important element of our increased regulatory oversight of Arkansas Nuclear One as it provides for an independent evaluation of the extent of the performance problems at the site,” NRC Region IV Administrator Marc Dapas said. “It also includes an assessment of how thorough the licensee has been in identifying the extent of its problems and whether we think the planned corrective actions are of sufficient scope and depth to maintain performance improvement.”

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; plants in Column 5 are not permitted to operate. The NRC increases the level of oversight and inspection in a graded manner as plant performance declines.

In June 2014, the NRC issued yellow findings to Arkansas Nuclear One in connection with a 2013 heavy equipment handling incident at the plant. In January 2015, the NRC issued yellow findings associated with flood protection at the plant. The cumulative effect of these violations moved the plant into Column 4. Arkansas Nuclear One is receiving the highest level of NRC oversight of operating plants.

Information about the plant’s [current performance](#) is available on the NRC web site.