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CONTACT: Victor Dricks, 817-200-1128

NRC Schedules Regulatory Conference to Discuss Apparent Violation At River Bend Station

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will meet with officials from Entergy Operations, Inc., on April 4 to discuss a preliminary inspection finding regarding the licensee's failure to adequately assess the risk associated with removing some ventilation system components from service prior to performing scheduled maintenance. The plant is located in St. Francisville, La.

The 1 p.m. meeting at the NRC's Region IV office at 1600 E. Lamar Blvd., Arlington, Texas, is open to the public. NRC officials will answer questions from the public after the business portion of the meeting. A telephone bridge will be available for the meeting by calling 888-790-5880 and entering passcode 2144018.

The NRC conducted a Special Inspection at River Bend to review the circumstances surrounding a loss of control building ventilation on March 9, 2015, caused by electrical and mechanical equipment problems. As part of that review, the NRC looked at the licensee's maintenance practices. Inspectors determined that prior to performing maintenance on some equipment that provides air conditioning to the plant's control room, the licensee failed to adequately assess the increase in risk associated with those activities. Loss of air conditioning in the control room could cause a failure or malfunction of vital plant equipment.

The NRC evaluates regulatory performance at commercial nuclear plants with a color-coded process that classifies inspection findings as green, white, yellow or red in order of increasing safety significance. The NRC has preliminarily determined that the inspection finding has low to moderate (white) safety significance which may require additional inspections, regulatory actions and oversight.

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