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NRC Schedules Meeting with TVA to Discuss Watts Bar Nuclear Plant Work Environment

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, March 22, with Tennessee Valley Authority officials to discuss the work environment within the operations staff at the Watts Bar nuclear power plant near Spring City, Tenn., about 60 miles southwest of Knoxville.

The NRC began a review into the work environment at the Watts Bar plant in late 2015 and found that some operations employees did not feel free to raise safety concerns. In addition, there were indications that licensed operators may have received undue influence and direction from TVA staff outside the control room.

“It is extremely important that all nuclear plant employees feel free to raise safety issues with their managers and with the NRC without fear of retaliation,” said NRC Region II Administrator Cathy Haney.

While the work environment issues did not lead to any events that affected worker or public safety, the NRC is still reviewing some actions to determine if any NRC regulations were violated.

The meeting is scheduled at the NRC Region II office, 245 Peachtree Center Avenue in Atlanta. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. and it is open to the public.

During the meeting, the NRC will discuss with TVA its review of the work environment at the plant, and TVA officials are expected to discuss steps they have taken or are planning to address the issues.

The meeting is between the NRC and TVA, but the NRC staff will be available after the business portion of the meeting to answer questions or provide additional information.