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NRC to Hold Open House to Discuss Agency's Assessment of Duane Arnold Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public open house on April 14, to discuss the agency's annual review of safety performance at the Duane Arnold nuclear power plant. The plant is operated by NextEra Energy Duane Arnold LLC, and is located in Palo, Iowa, about eight miles northwest of Cedar Rapids.

Those who attend the open house will have an opportunity to ask questions and have discussions directly with NRC staff members about the plant's 2015 performance and the agency's oversight of the facility. The open house, which will also include informational posters, is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. at the Palo Community Center, 2800 Hollenbeck Rd., in Palo.

"NRC inspectors who work at the plant and NRC staff from our regional office in Lisle, Ill., are looking forward to speaking with members of the public about the performance of the Duane Arnold plant and other topics related to nuclear safety that are of interest to the community," said NRC Region III Administrator Cynthia D. Pederson. "We hold such meetings near the plant every year to share information about the wide range of activities we conduct to ensure the plant operates safely and foster an open dialogue with interested members of the public."

Overall, the Duane Arnold facility operated safely in 2015. All performance indicators were green or low safety significance; however the unit was in Column 2 for all of 2015. This was due to a white or low to moderate finding related to inadequate quality controls during the application of coatings to the torus. After conducting a follow-up inspection, the NRC found the plant had addressed the issue and placed the plant back in Column 1 at the beginning of 2016. The torus is a ring-shaped structure that wraps around the base of the reactor and is part of containment.

NRC inspectors also identified issues in the areas of human performance. Specifically NRC inspectors found plant workers had not consistently used established plant processes when correcting issues. Corrective actions were taken, and by the end of 2015 NRC inspectors determined the plant actions appeared to be effective and sustainable.

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. A move to the other columns results in an increased level of NRC oversight and inspections.

This year Duane Arnold will continue to receive the detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for all plants. Routine inspections are performed by two NRC 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 [annual assessment letter](#) sent from the NRC Region III office to the company addresses the performance of the plant during 2015 and is available on the NRC website. The most current performance information for [Duane Arnold](#) is available on the NRC website.