



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No. I-11-021

June 13, 2011

Contact: Diane Screnci (610) 337-5330
Neil Sheehan (610) 337-5331

Email: OPA1.RESOURCE@nrc.gov

NRC TO HOLD MEETING ON JUNE 22 IN BRATTLEBORO, VT., TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, June 22, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant during 2010.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Brattleboro Union High School, at 131 Fairground Road in Brattleboro, Vt. Prior to the meeting's conclusion, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

Vermont Yankee is a boiling-water reactor located in Vernon, Vt. It is owned and operated by Entergy Nuclear.

"Our Annual Assessment reviews allow us to step back and gauge whether the nuclear power plants we regulate are on the right track in terms of performance and adhering to the highest levels of safety," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "Once we've completed these evaluations, we reach out to the public to share that information and to receive their feedback at a location near each plant. We welcome and value these exchanges."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with "green", representing very low safety significance, and increase to "white", "yellow" or "red", commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, Vermont Yankee operated safely during 2010. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed through the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no inspection findings that were "Greater than Green" (rising to the level requiring additional NRC oversight) or any performance indicators that were other than "Green" (exceeding the threshold for the indicator and requiring additional NRC oversight) for the units. Therefore, for the remainder of 2011, Vermont Yankee will continue to receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

However, the NRC plans to conduct additional inspections at the plant to oversee Entergy's efforts to address groundwater contamination at the site. Specifically, the additional NRC inspections will seek to ascertain if plant procedures and a groundwater movement model are sufficient to monitor remediation of the existing groundwater contamination plume at the site.

Routine inspections are carried out by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to each plant and by inspection specialists from the agency's Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. In 2010, the NRC devoted nearly 3,000 hours to inspection and related activities associated with Vermont Yankee, including three major team inspections. Among the areas at Vermont Yankee being inspected this year are the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, emergency preparedness and radiological safety.

The agency issues its review of performance at specific plants twice a year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC's website, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of end-of-year performance reviews every March, the public is provided with an opportunity to discuss the results. The meetings, which are held in the vicinity of the plant, are in keeping with the NRC's commitment to transparency and openness with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for Vermont Yankee is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/vy_2010q4.pdf. The notice for the public meeting is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML111570270. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resources@nrc.gov.

Current performance information for Vermont Yankee is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/VY/vy_chart.html.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's website.