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NRC Schedules Regulatory Conference to Discuss Apparent Violation at Columbia Generating Station

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with officials from Energy Northwest, Inc., on May 2 to discuss a preliminary inspection finding regarding the shipment of low-level waste from the Columbia Generating Station to a disposal facility. The plant is located near Richland, Wash.

The 1 p.m. meeting at the NRC Region IV office at 1600 E. Lamar Blvd., Arlington, Texas, will be open to the public. NRC officials will answer questions from the public following the business portion of the meeting. A telephone bridge will be available for the meeting by calling 888-809-8968 and entering passcode 8330824.

A three-member NRC team conducted a [special inspection](#) at the Columbia Generating Station to review the circumstances surrounding a Nov. 9, 2016, incident in which workers at the plant shipped a package of low-level nuclear waste to the U.S. Ecology disposal facility about 10 miles from the plant.

The NRC determined that workers used the wrong shipping container given the radioactivity level of the waste.

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 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.