

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
Region III Office of Public Affairs  
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NRC STAFF TO MEET WITH CONSUMERS ENERGY OFFICIALS  
TO DISCUSS PERFORMANCE AT PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet Wednesday, April 28, with Consumers Energy Company officials to discuss the recent Plant Performance Review of the Palisades Nuclear Power Station. The plant is located near Covert, Michigan.

The meeting will be at 2 p.m. (EST) in the Training Building at the Palisades plant, 27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway, Covert. The meeting is open to public observation. NRC officials will be available after the meeting for questions and comments from members of the public and the news media.

In a March 26 letter to Consumers Energy Company, which operates the plant, Geoffrey Grant, Division Director in the NRC's Region III Office, said, "Overall, performance at Palisades was acceptable. The plant continued to be operated in a deliberate and conservative manner even though the plant staff was frequently challenged by equipment problems."

The text of the plant performance review letter is available from the NRC Region III Office of Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr/255ppr1.htm>. The review covered the time period from January 1997 through January 31.

NRC reviews safety performance twice a year at every licensed nuclear power plant in the nation. These reviews give the agency staff an integrated assessment of plant performance and provide a basis for planning inspection activities.

Plant performance reviews are an interim measure NRC is using to monitor nuclear power plant safety. The agency began using it for this purpose after suspending the Systematic Assessment of License Performance (SALP) process until a new assessment program is developed. Previously, SALP reports were issued every 12 to 24 months.

The new reactor oversight and assessment program being developed will provide quarterly performance reports, based on a number of performance indicators and on inspection findings. This program will be tested at nine plants beginning in June and will be extended to all plants next January. A full description of the new program is available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>.

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