



NRC NEWS

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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NRC TO MEET WITH PUBLIC TO DISCUSS NEW REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROCESS FOR WNP-2

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public meeting Thursday, July 6, in Richland, Wash., to discuss the new reactor oversight process for WNP-2, a nuclear power plant operated by Energy Northwest.

The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr. Anyone who would like to learn more about the new oversight process or ask questions of NRC officials is invited to attend.

The new program was implemented nationwide in early April after a six-month pilot test conducted at 13 nuclear power plants at nine sites from May to November 1999. It uses more objective, timely, and safety-significant criteria in assessing performance, while seeking to more effectively and efficiently regulate the industry. It also takes into account improvements in the performance of the nuclear industry over the past twenty years.

Under the new process, inspections by NRC resident inspectors and regional office-based personnel are supplemented by statistical measures of plant activities called performance indicators. These performance indicators measure important safety aspects of plant performance, including the viability of redundant safety systems, emergency planning, radiation protection, and security.

Inspection findings and performance indicators for each nuclear power plant are posted on the NRC's internet website every three months, along with semi-annual updates to each plant's inspection plans. Current performance information for WNP-2 can be found at:

http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WASH2/wash2_chart.html

A plain language summary of the new inspection and assessment program is available from the NRC Office of Public Affairs or on the website at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>.

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