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CONTACT: Jan Strasma (630)829-9663/e-mail: rjs2@nrc.gov
Pam Alloway-Mueller (630)829-9662/e-mail: pla@nrc.gov

NRC STAFF TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING JULY 14 IN CORDOVA, ILLINOIS TO DESCRIBE LATEST ASSESSMENT OF QUAD CITIES NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting July 14 in Cordova, Illinois, to discuss the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Plant's latest performance review results. The plant is operated by Commonwealth Edison Co.

The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. CDT, at the plant's Training Center at 22710 - 206th Avenue N.

The Plant Performance Reviews (PPRs) are an interim measure the NRC has used to assess nuclear power plant safety while a revised reactor oversight process was being developed. The primary purpose of the PPRs is to evaluate safety performance information and identify any changes in plant performance so the NRC can allocate inspection resources appropriately. The text of each PPR letter, including the one on Quad Cities, is available from the NRC Office of Public Affairs and has been posted at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr> on the NRC web site.

The NRC staff will also discuss a change in one of the performance indicators which supplement NRC inspections in assessing the plant's performance.

The utility found, during a routine test in March, that a oil pump associated with the high pressure emergency cooling water system would not function automatically and therefore the emergency system was considered inoperable. The oil pump, however, could have been controlled manually, and the emergency system would then have been operational. The pump problem was subsequently repaired, and the cooling system is now fully operable.

The NRC reactor oversight process characterizes the safety significance of each performance indicator by a color -- green, white, yellow, or red. A green performance indicator receives normal NRC oversight, while white, yellow, or red assessments receive increasing NRC involvement. The equipment problem with the high pressure emergency cooling system resulted in a "yellow" performance indicator.

When a "yellow" performance indicator or inspection finding occurs, the oversight process calls for the NRC to hold a public meeting with plant management, conduct additional inspections focused on the cause of the degraded performance, and oversee the plant staff's self-assessment and correction of the issues.

Current performance information for the plants is available on the NRC web site at:
<<http://www.nrc.gov/ras>>.

A plain language summary of the new reactor oversight process is available from the NRC Office of Public Affairs or on the web site at: <<http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>>.

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