



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING NEAR HATCH PLANT ON CHANGES IN REACTOR OVERSIGHT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has scheduled a public meeting for August 23 to discuss the new reactor oversight process which began at Southern Nuclear Operating Company's Hatch nuclear power plant, near Vidalia, Georgia, in April.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. EDT at the Southeastern Technical Institute's Tattnall Auditorium, Vidalia, GA, and members of the public will have the opportunity to ask questions during the meeting.

The new oversight process uses more objective, timely, and safety-significant criteria in assessing performance, while seeking to more effectively and efficiently regulate the industry. 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 operations, including the viability of redundant safety systems, emergency planning, radiation protection, and security measures.

Inspection findings and performance indicators for each nuclear power plant are posted on the NRC's web site every three months. The safety significance of each inspection finding or performance indicator is characterized by a color -- green, white, yellow, or red.

The NRC response to the inspection findings and performance indicators will be based on the significance of the items. A green finding receives normal NRC oversight, while white, yellow, or red assessments receive increasing NRC involvement. Multiple red findings could result in a plant shutdown.

A plain language summary of the 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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