



NRC NEWS

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

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LICENSING BOARD SCHEDULES EVIDENTIARY HEARING FOR NORTH ANNA EARLY SITE PERMIT

The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, an independent judicial arm of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, has scheduled an evidentiary hearing on the Early Site Permit (ESP) sought by Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC for the current North Anna nuclear plant site 40 miles northwest of Richmond, Va.

The evidentiary hearing will begin before the three-judge panel at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 24, in the Louisa County Government Building in the town of Louisa near the plant site. It is scheduled for the remainder of that week and if not completed by Friday, the hearing will resume the following week.

The public is welcome to attend and observe the hearing, but this is a judicial proceeding and only the attorneys and witnesses for Dominion and the NRC staff will participate. Members of the public have previously provided information through written statements and a limited appearance session held in Louisa in early February.

The main function of the evidentiary hearing will be for the Board to question witnesses on seven topics that were specified by the Board in late March 2007. The seven topics are:

1. Site Characteristics, Hydrology, Soil, Groundwater and Aquifers
2. Tritium
3. Zero Release Commitment
4. Radiological Releases and Doses From Normal Operations
5. Surface Water Impacts and Possible Mitigation Measures
6. Seismic Safety
7. National Environmental Policy Act Alternatives

The evidentiary hearing will also include an opening statement by Dominion and by the NRC Staff, and some legal questions by the Board at the end.

Dominion's ESP application was filed on Sept. 25, 2003. If approved by the Board, the permit would give Dominion between 10 and 20 years to decide whether to build additional nuclear plants on the site and to file an application with the NRC requesting approval for construction and operation.

The NRC staff's preliminary recommendation is that a permit should be issued. The staff's conclusions, however, are not binding on the Board, which will make its own independent judgment on the ESP application.

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