



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406
E-mail: opal@nrc.gov
Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. I-08-032

May 13, 2008

Contact: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

NRC TO DISCUSS INSPECTION OF COMPANY'S ASSESSMENT OF GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION AT INDIAN POINT PLANT ON MAY 20

The results of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission inspection of Entergy's work on characterizing groundwater contamination at the Indian Point nuclear power plant will be discussed at a public meeting on Tuesday, May 20. Indian Point is located in Buchanan (Westchester County), N.Y., and operated by Entergy Nuclear Northeast.

Scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m., the meeting will take place at the Colonial Terrace, 119 Oregon Road in Cortlandt Manor, N.Y. Prior to the formal session, the NRC will offer an informational poster-board open house at the facility, from 4 to 6 p.m. At that session, members of the public will have an opportunity to discuss issues related to the subject on a one-on-one basis with NRC staff.

"Throughout the course of Entergy's efforts to determine the extent of the contamination and then develop a plan to address it going forward, we have closely followed the company's actions every step of the way," said NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins. "As part of our reviews, we have also conducted independent analysis and groundwater sampling. At the meeting on May 20th, we will explain what we found as a result of our inspections and whether we consider Entergy's plans for dealing with the contamination to be reasonable, thorough and protective of the public and the environment."

The groundwater contamination at Indian Point was first identified after cracks were found on a wall of the Unit 2 spent fuel pool during excavation work adjacent to that structure. Entergy notified the NRC of that condition on Sept. 1, 2005. The company initiated an investigation and subsequently determined that there was tritium contamination in the groundwater in the vicinity of the spent fuel pool. That discovery triggered a comprehensive effort to characterize the extent of any groundwater contamination at the site, to identify the sources and to develop a plan for addressing the problem.

On Sept. 20, 2005, the NRC commenced a Special Inspection to examine Entergy's actions in response to the problem. That inspection concluded that the groundwater

contamination did not – nor was it likely to – affect public health and safety. The results of that review were discussed at a public meeting on March 28, 2006. Since then, the NRC has continued to inspect and monitor the company’s activities. Reactor Oversight Process Deviation Memorandums, signed by the agency’s Executive Director for Operations, authorized the allocation of additional inspection resources to carry out these reviews.

Entergy submitted to the NRC the results of its groundwater investigation on Jan. 11, 2008. It also provided its plans for remediation and long-term monitoring of the contamination. At the meeting on May 20th, prior to the NRC’s presentation regarding its inspection, the company will discuss the results of its hydrogeophysical site characterization effort; its plans for continued monitoring of groundwater conditions at the site; and the upcoming drainage of water and removal of fuel from the Unit 1 spent fuel pool. The actions involving the Unit 1 spent fuel pool are expected to result in the halt of groundwater contamination from that location, which has been the most significant source of the contamination at the site.

The NRC staff will then provide details of its inspection. Among the objectives of the inspection were to understand the cause of the leakage and its radiological significance; ensure that appropriate and timely actions were taken by Entergy to investigate the condition; determine the company’s conformance with applicable regulatory requirements; and provide an independent analysis to evaluate the quality of the company’s assessment and investigation results. NRC inspectors reviewed company records and previous inspection reports issued by the agency; observed and inspected Entergy activities; interviewed company personnel; and independently collected and analyzed groundwater samples.

A copy of the inspection report will be available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML081340425. ADAMS is accessible at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> . Help in using ADAMS is available via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR@NRC.GOV .

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.