



NRC NEWS

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ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD TO HEAR ORAL ARGUMENT OCT. 29 ON PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) will hear oral arguments Oct. 29 in Hastings, Minn. regarding the application by Nuclear Management Company, LLC to renew its license for an additional 20 years of operation at the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2, located near Red Wing, Minn.

The Prairie Island Indian Community has petitioned to intervene in the license renewal proceeding. The oral arguments will address the standing of this potential party to intervene and the admissibility of its various environmental and technical contentions.

The oral arguments will be held in the Dakota County Judicial Center, Courtroom 2E, 1560 Highway 55 in Hastings. They will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. Central Time.

The plant's operator submitted a license renewal application dated April 11 and supplemented it by a letter dated May 16. Notice of opportunity for a hearing was published in the Federal Register June 17. The Prairie Island Community filed a request for a hearing August 18. Oral arguments will provide the petitioner with an opportunity to clarify the issues before the Board.

Current plans call for the proceeding to be made available for live viewing via the following internet Web stream feed at <http://www.visualwebcaster.com/event.asp?id=52392>.

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years. This license term was selected based on economic and anti-trust considerations, not technical limitations. The license may be renewed for an additional 20 years, provided that NRC requirements are met. The current operating licenses for Prairie Island are due to expire on Aug. 9, 2013, for Unit 1 and Oct. 29, 2014, for Unit 2.

The ASLB Panel is the independent adjudicatory body of the NRC. It acts on behalf of the Commission and independent of the agency staff to conduct public hearings on contested issues. These issues arise in the course of licensing and enforcement proceedings on commercial nuclear power reactors and the civilian use of nuclear materials in the United States.

Licensing boards typically consist of three administrative judges. For this proceeding, the board includes two technical experts and an attorney.

Additional information on the license renewal process is available on the NRC's web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/license-renewal-bg.html> and <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html>.

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