



NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES MEETING TO DISCUSS 2009 PERFORMANCE OF OCONEE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a meeting for Thursday, April 8, to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance during 2009 at the Oconee nuclear power plant. The plant, operated by Duke Energy, is near Seneca, S.C., about 30 miles west of Greenville.

The meeting, in the Oconee World of Energy, 7812 Rochester Highway in Seneca, is informal and will begin with a short presentation at 6:30 p.m., followed by an open house ending at 8 p.m.

NRC staff will be available to answer questions on the safety performance of the Oconee plant, as well as the NRC role in ensuring safe plant operation.

"We inspect and review the performance of the Oconee plant and all other commercial nuclear plants throughout the year," NRC Region II Administrator Luis Reyes said. "This meeting gives us an opportunity to discuss the plant's safety performance with the company, local officials and citizens interested in the plant."

A letter sent from the NRC Region II office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during 2009 and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/oco_2009q4.pdf.

The NRC found that the Oconee plant met all NRC safety objectives during 2009, and performance for all three units was at a level that resulted in no additional NRC oversight. Unit 1 was subject to a supplemental inspection in August 2009 due to a fourth quarter 2008 inspection finding of low to moderate safety significance related to a voltage regulator maintenance procedure. Actions were taken to address that finding, and the inspection identified no weaknesses.

During the remainder of 2010, the NRC plans to continue to conduct the very detailed baseline inspections required at all plants. Those inspections are performed by NRC resident inspectors assigned to the site, supplemented by more specific inspections completed by region-based NRC inspectors. In addition to the detailed routine inspections, the agency will complete

some generic inspections related to reactor cooling system maintenance and spent fuel storage at Oconee in 2010 as well as conduct operator licensing examinations. The NRC staff will also continue its review of significant modifications to the plant associated with fire protection, external flooding, tornadoes and high energy line break mitigation.

Current performance information for Oconee Unit 1 is available on the NRC web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OCO1/oco1_chart.html . Current information for Units 2 and 3 is at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OCO2/oco2_chart.html and www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OCO3/oco3_chart.html .

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