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2443 Warrenville Road

Lisle IL 60532

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Contact: Viktoria Mitlyng (630) 829-9662
Prema Chandrathil (630) 829-9663

E-Mail: OPA3.RegionIII@nrc.gov

NRC SCHEDULES OPEN HOUSE FOR JUNE 16 TO DISCUSS D. C. COOK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PERFORMANCE AND NRC OVERSIGHT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled an open house for Thursday, June 16, in St. Joseph, Mich., to discuss with local residents the agency's assessment of safety performance for last year at the D. C. Cook Nuclear Power Plant and other NRC oversight activities.

The open house is informal and will begin at 6 p.m. EDT in the auditorium at the Maud Preston Palenske Memorial Library, 500 Market St., St Joseph. Interested members of the public are invited to attend any time during the session. The NRC's two resident inspectors and other staff members will be available to discuss the D. C. Cook plant's performance and other issues.

The D. C. Cook plant, which has two operating units, is operated by Indiana Michigan Power Co. It is located near Bridgman, Mich., about 13 miles south of Benton Harbor.

"The NRC continually reviews the performance of the D. C. Cook facility and the nation's other commercial nuclear power facilities," said NRC Region III Administrator Mark Satorius. "This meeting allows us to discuss our annual assessment of safety performance with members of the local community. The goal of this open house is to explain how the NRC works to protect people and the environment and answer questions from residents about nuclear regulation."

A letter sent from the NRC Region III office to plant officials addressed the performance of the plant during 2010 and will serve as the basis for the open house discussion. It is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/cook_2010q4.pdf.

Overall, the NRC found that the D. C. Cook facility operated safely in 2010.

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved.

All performance indicators and inspection findings for D. C. Cook during 2010 were determined to be “green.” Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance.

D. C. Cook will continue to receive the detailed inspection regime required for plants that are operating well and require no additional oversight. Inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency’s headquarters in Rockville, Md. In addition to the day-to-day inspections performed by the resident inspectors, specific areas of plant operations to be inspected include radiation protection, plant modifications, problem identification and resolution, in-service inspection activities for safety systems, fire protection, spent reactor fuel storage, and emergency preparedness.

The most current performance information for D. C. Cook is available on the NRC website at: (Unit 1) http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/COOK1/cook1_chart.html and (Unit 2) http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/COOK2/cook2_chart.html.

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