



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON MARCH 27th IN HAMPTON, N.H., TO DISCUSS SEABROOK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public open house on Wednesday, March 27, to discuss the agency's annual review of safety performance at the Seabrook nuclear power plant. Also, a subsequent NRC public meeting regarding Seabrook is expected to take place in the upcoming few months to discuss concrete degradation issues and other timely matters.

During the open house, which is scheduled for 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Best Western Inn at Hampton, at 815 W. Lafayette Road in Hampton, N.H., attendees will have an opportunity to hold one-on-one discussions with NRC staff members about the plant's 2012 performance and the agency's oversight of the facility. NRC staff on hand will include the inspectors assigned to the plant on a full-time basis.

While the focus of the open house will be the plant's 2012 performance and not concrete degradation experienced at Seabrook, NRC technical specialists from the agency's headquarters and Region I Office will be available to answer questions related to that topic. A public meeting for the discussion of the issue was held on Dec. 11, 2012, and another will follow in upcoming few months to discuss this and other timely matters.

Overall, the Seabrook plant — a pressurized-water reactor located in Seabrook, N.H., and owned by NextEra Energy Seabrook, LLC — operated safely during 2012. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the facility that were other than green (very low risk). The plant did have an open white (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding related to emergency preparedness. That finding was finalized in August 2012, causing Seabrook to receive increased oversight from the NRC. However, that finding was closed out on March 15, 2013, after the agency concluded that NextEra's completed and planned corrective actions had addressed the performance issues. Consequently, the plant is expected to return to the normal level of oversight as of the end of the first quarter of 2013.

Plants that are meeting criteria set out by the NRC will receive the normal level of oversight, which consists of a detailed regime involving thousands of hours of inspection. In

2012, the agency devoted approximately 8,900 hours of inspection to the Seabrook plant. This included inspections devoted to concrete degradation identified at the facility.

In the meantime, the NRC is continuing to devote additional inspection resources to Seabrook to independently verify and assess work being done to address concrete degradation identified at the plant. The NRC's Reactor Oversight Process does not prescribe increased oversight based on the company's performance in this area, but the agency staff determined that additional inspections and assessments are needed to support the review of company commitments and planned large-scale concrete specimen testing, the development of staff technical guidance, and stakeholder communications and outreach activities. The allocation of those resources was approved by a "Deviation Memorandum" signed by the agency's Executive Director for Operations in September.

"When the time comes to evaluate a plant's performance for the previous year, we take a fresh look at any and all issues that might be of concern. We then adjust our plans for assessing the facility accordingly," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "As we map out our inspection plans for the remainder of 2013, we remain focused on ensuring that safety is the foremost objective for all plant operators."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess plant performance. The colors begin with green and then increase to white, yellow or red, commensurate with the risk significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at each plant twice a year: during the mid-cycle, or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC's web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual reports every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The sessions are in keeping with the agency's commitment to transparency with respect to its activities.

The [Annual Assessment Letter](#) for the Seabrook plant is available on the NRC web site. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System ([ADAMS](#)) under accession number ML13073A186. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at: PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by the two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the agency's Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas of performance to be inspected this year at Seabrook by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel and emergency preparedness.

Current [performance information](#) for Seabrook is available on the NRC web site.

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