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# NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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## **NRC TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON APRIL 2 IN PLYMOUTH, MASS., TO DISCUSS PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public open house on Tuesday, April 2, to discuss the agency's annual assessment of safety performance at the Pilgrim nuclear power plant.

During the open house, which is scheduled for 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Plymouth Town Hall, at 11 Lincoln St. in Plymouth, Mass., 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, several NRC technical experts and management from the Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa.

In addition, NRC staff will brief Plymouth's Board of Selectmen at 7 p.m. on the same day and at the same location on plans for a dry cask storage facility for spent nuclear fuel at Pilgrim, as well as on the plant's performance in 2012. The meeting will include a public question-and-answer portion to be facilitated by the board.

Overall, the Pilgrim plant — located in Plymouth and operated by Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. — 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) and no inspection findings that were greater than green (that is, none of the findings exceeded very low safety significance). As a result, Pilgrim will continue to receive the NRC's normal level of oversight during 2013.

For plants that are meeting criteria set out by the NRC, normal oversight still consists of a detailed regime involving thousands of hours of inspection. In 2012, the agency devoted approximately 7,400 hours of inspection to the Pilgrim plant.

The NRC issued Pilgrim a white (low to moderate safety significance) inspection finding in November 2011 in response to the failure of control room operators to follow appropriate standards and procedures related to reactivity control during a start-up of the reactor on May 10, 2011. An NRC team inspection performed at the plant in November 2012 determined that Entergy had satisfactorily evaluated the root causes of the event and put in place appropriate

corrective actions. Based on the results of that review, the NRC closed out the finding in December 2012.

“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 uses 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 website, [www.nrc.gov](http://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 Pilgrim is available on the NRC [website](#). The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System ([ADAMS](#)) under accession number ML13086A590. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at: [PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV](mailto: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 by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety; emergency preparedness; underground pipes and tanks; and the construction of the concrete pad for the dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel.

Current performance information for Pilgrim is available on the NRC [website](#).

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