



# NRC NEWS

## U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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### **NRC SCHEDULES MEETINGS TO DISCUSS WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT UNIT 1 PERFORMANCE AND WATTS BAR UNIT 2 CONSTRUCTION**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled two meetings for April 16 to discuss the agency's inspections and assessment of Unit 1 at the Watts Bar nuclear power plant, and NRC inspection and oversight of construction at Watts Bar Unit 2 during 2012. The Watts Bar plant, operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority, is located near Spring City, Tenn., about 60 miles southwest of Knoxville.

The first meeting is to discuss Watts Bar Unit 2 and is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. at the Comfort Inn, 2811 Decatur Pike in Athens, Tenn. After a brief presentation on the NRC's assessment of construction activities at Unit 2, the NRC staff will be available to answer questions or provide additional information about NRC oversight and inspection.

The second meeting is about Watts Bar Unit 1 and is scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m. in the same location and will cover the NRC staff's 2012 assessment of Unit 1, which has been in operation since 1996. The NRC staff will also be available after the second meeting.

"The NRC inspects nuclear plants and monitors their performance on an ongoing basis," said NRC Region II Administrator Victor McCree. "We issue inspection reports throughout the year and we hold these annual meetings near each plant to discuss our oversight and answer any questions local residents may have."

For Unit 2, the NRC staff concluded that construction work was conducted in a manner that met the agency's requirements. However, NRC inspectors identified some apparent violations related to the TVA commercial-grade dedication program at Watts Bar 2 and the NRC is still reviewing those violations. Commercial-grade dedication is a process that provides reasonable assurance that components purchased from a commercial supplier are equivalent to nuclear-grade items.

Also at Unit 2, the NRC issued a Confirmatory Order regarding inadequate records for containment penetration cables. The NRC plans to review TVA's corrective actions, but no other issues were identified during the assessment period that would cause the NRC to increase its wide-ranging construction inspection efforts.

The NRC [assessment letter](#) for Watts Bar Unit 2 construction activities during 2012 can be found on the NRC website.

Watts Bar Unit 1 was subjected to increased NRC oversight during the first two quarters of 2012 for a security issue, but NRC inspectors found that the problem had been corrected and Unit 1 was returned to normal NRC oversight during the second half of 2012.

There were no additional findings or performance indicators that would cause the NRC to increase its level of oversight and inspection. During 2013, the NRC staff will continue the detailed routine inspections at Watts Bar Unit 1 that all nuclear power plants receive.

Inspections are carried out by the NRC resident inspectors assigned to the plant and by specialized inspectors from the Region II office in Atlanta.

Inspection findings and performance indicators for Watts Bar Unit 1 and other operating nuclear plants are updated on the NRC's [website](#) each quarter.

The [annual assessment letter](#) and [current performance information](#) for Watts Bar Unit 1 are available on the NRC website.

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