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NRC to Hold Open House, Meeting Dec. 18 in Hampton, N.H., to Discuss Reviews of Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant Concrete Degradation

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a public open house and a public meeting for Dec. 18 to discuss work being performed by the owner of the Seabrook nuclear power plant to address concrete degradation at the facility. The plant is located in Seabrook, N.H., and is owned and operated by NextEra.

The sessions, which were rescheduled from Oct. 9 due to the federal government shutdown, will be held at the Best Western Plus – The Inn at Hampton, at 815 Lafayette Road in Hampton, N.H. The open house will begin at 5 p.m. and allow for one-on-one discussions between NRC staff and members of the public on the topic. During the formal meeting, set to start at 6 p.m., NRC staff and NextEra will discuss the subject. The second part of the meeting will provide an opportunity for audience members to ask questions of the NRC staff.

“We have held earlier meetings in the vicinity of the Seabrook plant on this subject, which helped the public to better understand this issue and provided valuable feedback to the NRC,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “The meeting on December 18 will afford another opportunity for members of the public to learn the status of our reviews in this area and the company’s activities to deal with this issue, as well as provide audience members with a chance to once again share their perspectives.”

The concrete degradation at Seabrook is caused by alkali silica reaction, or ASR. This is a chemical combining of reactive silica from the concrete aggregate with the alkali from the cement paste in the presence of moisture. (Aggregates are inert granular materials, such as sand, gravel or crushed stone that, along with water and cement paste, are an essential ingredient in concrete.) The result of the reaction is a gel, which can expand and cause micro-cracks in the concrete.

After the ASR problem was identified at the plant in 2010, the NRC in May 2012 issued a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) to NextEra confirming that it would complete a variety of actions in response to the condition. On Oct. 9, 2013, the NRC announced that the CAL was being closed out after the agency confirmed through inspections that the actions committed to by the company were being met.

While NRC inspections have determined that ASR-affected structures at the plant remain capable of performing their safety functions, the NRC will continue to provide focused oversight of the company's ongoing actions to resolve the issue. This includes NRC review of the results of the testing program being conducted at the University of Texas-Austin, as well as of the on-site monitoring of ASR progression in the plant's concrete structures.

More information about the NRC's reviews of Seabrook concrete degradation can be found on an agency [webpage](#) devoted to that topic.