NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES REGULATORY CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT CONCERN

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has scheduled a regulatory conference with officials of Southern Nuclear Operating Company on August 16 in Atlanta to discuss the risk significance of an inspection finding at the company's Hatch nuclear power plant, located near Baxley, Ga.

NRC and Southern Nuclear officials will discuss the significance of concerns associated with an NRC inspection finding involving the plant's Technical Support Center being out of service for a period of ten days during late April and early May this year. The TSC is a facility that would be occupied by plant personnel during certain emergency response situations. That facility was removed from service to perform ventilation system modifications and based on the NRC's review, the removal of the facility from service for that period is a performance deficiency and an apparent violation of NRC regulations.

The NRC evaluates regulatory performance at commercial nuclear power plants with a color-coded system which classifies findings as either green, white, yellow or red, in increasing order of safety significance. The NRC's preliminary evaluation determined that the safety significance of this issue at Hatch is White, meaning that it is considered to be of low to moderate safety significance.

The meeting is open to public observation and is scheduled for 1:00 p.m., in the NRC's Region II office, located on the 24th floor of the Atlanta Federal Center at 61 Forsyth Street SW in Atlanta.

No decisions on the final safety significance, any apparent violation or any possible enforcement action will be made during the conference. Those decisions will be made by NRC officials at a later time.

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