NRC NEWS

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NRC REVISES PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING POSSIBLE GENERIC SAFETY ISSUES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is simplifying its procedures for considering if a potential safety issue is "generic," in that it applies to a wide range of licensees such as nuclear power plant operators. The NRC works with its licensees to ensure generic safety issues are appropriately resolved.

These revisions are reflected in an NRC management directive on the agency's Generic Issues Program, and results from the Davis-Besse Lessons Learned Task Force's recommendation that the process for capturing, identifying and resolving generic safety issues should be improved.

"These changes will make the program easier to use, encouraging more participation by NRC staff and interested stakeholders," said Carl Paperiello, Director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research. "The improved program will help to further ensure lessons learned from events at our licensees' facilities are properly incorporated into the NRC's oversight program."

Changes to the program include:

– Requiring NRC staff to obtain endorsements from the agency's relevant independent advisory committee (i.e., Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards) before advancing a generic issue through the process or closing an issue out; and

– Providing NRC offices more flexibility, based on an issue's safety significance and other factors, in determining a target completion date for resolving the issue.

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