



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING IN PLYMOUTH, MASS., ON CHANGES IN REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROGRAM AT PILGRIM

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has scheduled a public meeting for Wednesday, August 30, in Plymouth, Mass., to discuss the agency's new reactor oversight process. Plymouth is home to one of the nation's 103 operating commercial nuclear power plants, the Pilgrim facility.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the John Carver Inn, 25 Summer Street. Members of the public will have the opportunity to ask questions of NRC staff during and after the meeting.

The new oversight process, which began at Pilgrim in April, uses more objective, timely and safety-significant criteria in assessing performance while seeking to more effectively and efficiently regulate the industry. Under the new process, inspections by NRC resident inspectors and regional office-based personnel are supplemented by statistical measures of plant activities called performance indicators. These performance indicators measure important safety aspects of plant operations, including the viability of redundant safety systems, emergency planning, radiation protection and security measures.

Inspection findings and performance indicators for each nuclear power plant are posted on the NRC's web site every three months. The safety significance of each inspection finding or performance indicator is characterized by a color -- green, white, yellow or red.

The NRC response to the inspection finding and performance indicators will be based on the significance of the items. A green finding receives normal NRC oversight, while white, yellow or red assessments receive increasing NRC involvement. Multiple red findings could result in a plant shutdown.

A plain language summary of the reactor oversight process is available from the NRC Office of Public Affairs or on the web site at: www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm . Detailed information regarding the reactor oversight process is available on the web site at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/index.html .