



NRC NEWS

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION IV**

611 Ryan Plaza Drive - Suite 400

Arlington TX 76011-8064

Website: www.nrc.gov

No. IV-02-002

January 25, 2002

CONTACT: Breck Henderson

Phone: 817-860-8128

Cellular: 817-917-1227

e-mail: Opa4@nrc.gov

NRC STAFF TO MEET WITH NPPD TO DISCUSS OPERATOR REQUALIFICATION AT COOPER NUCLEAR STATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a regulatory conference with officials of Nebraska Public Power District, operator of the Cooper Nuclear Station near Brownville, Nebraska, on Friday, February 1, to discuss tests given to operators at the plant.

The meeting, which is open to public observation, will begin at 8 a.m. in NRC Region IV offices in Arlington, Texas. NRC officials in Arlington will be available after the meeting to answer questions. NPPD requested this conference to discuss NRC inspection results documented in an inspection report issued on January 2. The purpose of the regulatory conference is to allow NPPD an opportunity to present its perspective on the significance of an NRC inspection finding and any information it believes is important to discuss with the NRC staff before the NRC makes any final decisions.

The NRC staff and NPPD officials will discuss an NRC inspection finding with a preliminary significance determination of "white," which indicates low to moderate safety significance. The finding involves the NRC-required test given to operators every two years that operators must pass to retain an NRC license. NRC inspectors found potential irregularities in the written test administered by NPPD to its licensed operators at the Cooper Nuclear Station in 2000.

A "white" finding is defined as a regulatory problem with low to moderate safety significance. The NRC evaluates regulatory performance at commercial nuclear power plants with a color coded significance determination process which classifies regulatory findings as being in one of four color categories: green, white, yellow, or red in increasing order of safety significance.

The inspection finding may also involve a violation of NRC regulations. That potential violation is being considered for enforcement action. However, no decision on the potential violation, any enforcement action, or the final significance determination of the inspection finding will be made at the conference. Those decisions will be made later by NRC officials.

###