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NRC PUBLISHES REDACTED SAFETY EVALUATION FOR PROPOSED VERMONT YANKEE POWER INCREASE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a public version of its draft safety evaluation (SE) for Entergy Nuclear's request to increase Vermont Yankee's power output by 20 percent.

Since Entergy applied for the power increase, or "uprate," in September 2003, the NRC staff has spent more than 9,000 hours reviewing the request, and the SE represents the results of that work to date. The evaluation was provided to Entergy on Oct. 21 in order for the utility to review the document to remove proprietary information. The draft SE's preliminary conclusion is that Vermont Yankee can safely operate at the uprated power level, with certain conditions.

"We're focused on ensuring Vermont Yankee operates safely, and the work that went into this report shows how thoroughly we're reviewing the uprate request," said Jim Dyer, Director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. "All the parties involved, including the staff, Entergy, the state of Vermont, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, still have a lot of work to do before we come to a conclusion about the uprate."

The NRC will not approve the Vermont Yankee uprate, or any proposed changes to a reactor's license, unless the agency can conclude the changes can be implemented safely. The redacted draft SE is available from the NRC's electronic documents database, ADAMS, by entering ML053010167 at this address: <http://adamswebsearch.nrc.gov/dologin.htm>. The letter notifying Entergy of the redacted document is available by entering ML053010145 at the same address.

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