



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS 2005 PERFORMANCE AT SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is scheduled to meet with Tennessee Valley Authority officials April 5 to discuss the NRC's annual assessment of safety performance at the Sequoyah nuclear power plant, located near Soddy-Daisy, Tenn. The period covered is the calendar year 2005.

The 2:00 p.m. meeting at the Sequoyah Training Center is open to public observation. Before the meeting ends, NRC staff will be available to answer public questions on the plant's safety performance, as well as the agency's role in ensuring safe operation of the facility.

"Each year the NRC staff assesses the performance of the Sequoyah plant and all of the nation's other commercial nuclear power plants," NRC Region II Administrator William Travers said. "This meeting gives us a chance to discuss our assessment with the company, with local officials and with residents near the plant. Our aim is to make this information available to the public and answer any questions people may have about our oversight."

The report says the Sequoyah plant operated safely during 2005. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. Both Sequoyah reactors received "green" inspection findings from the NRC during 2005, which means that all were of low safety significance. As a result, Sequoyah will receive the baseline, or normal, level of NRC inspections during 2006.

A letter sent from the NRC Region II Office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during the period and will serve as the basis for the meeting discussion. It is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/seq_2005q4.pdf.

Routine inspections are performed by NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region II Office in Atlanta, and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. In addition to the baseline inspections in 2006, the NRC plans inspections of Sequoyah's Independent Spent Fuel (Dry Cask) Storage Installation and inspections of Unit 2 containment building sumps and the Unit 2 reactor pressure vessel heads and head penetration nozzles. These inspections are part of the agency's review of sump clogging and vessel head penetration cracking at pressurized water reactors.

Current performance information for Sequoyah Unit 1 is available on the NRC's web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/SEQ1/seq1_chart.html and at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/SEQ2/seq2_chart.html for Sequoyah Unit 2 .

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