



NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

61 Forsyth Street SW, Atlanta GA 30303

Web Site: www.nrc.gov

No. II-06-009

CONTACT: Ken Clark (404)562-4416
Roger Hannah (404)562-4417

March 28, 2006

E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC TO DISCUSS 2005 PERFORMANCE AT WATTS BAR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is scheduled to meet with Tennessee Valley Authority officials April 4 to discuss the NRC's annual assessment of safety performance at the Watts Bar nuclear power plant, located near Spring City, Tenn. The period covered is the calendar year 2005.

The 3:00 p.m. meeting at the Watts Bar Training Center near the plant 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 rates the performance of the Watts Bar 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 NRC report says the Watts Bar plant operated safely during 2005. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess performance. The colors start with "green" and increase to "white," "yellow" or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The report said TVA's investigation and corrective actions for a "white" finding having to do with cooling water silt problems during the last quarter of 2004 was "thorough and appropriate." It also said cross-cutting issues raised in mid 2005 in the area of human performance due to failure to implement procedures during operations and refueling outage preparations, have been corrected.

Based on the plant's performance during 2005, the NRC said Watts Bar will receive the baseline, or normal, level of inspections during 2006. The NRC also plans to conduct non-routine inspections of the plant's steam generator replacement project, of planned upgrades to the containment building sump, and inspections of the storage and preservation of Unit 2, which has never been licensed to operate.

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/wb_2005q4.pdf.

Routine inspections are performed by NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by specialists from the Region II Office in Atlanta, and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md.

Current information for the Watts Bar plant is available on the NRC web site at:
www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/WB1/wb1_chart.html .

###