



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SCHEDULES REGULATORY AND ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATIONS AT HARRIS NUCLEAR PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a regulatory and pre-decisional enforcement conference with officials of Duke Energy to discuss apparent violations of NRC requirements involving the ventilation systems for facilities at the Harris nuclear power plant that would be staffed during emergencies.

The Harris plant, which is operated by Duke Energy, is located near New Hill, N.C., about 20 miles southwest of Raleigh.

NRC and company officials will discuss the safety significance of two inspection findings related to the ventilation systems for the plant's Emergency Operations Facility, or EOF, and Technical Support Center, or TSC.

One apparent violation involves multiple examples of the company's failure to maintain the EOF ventilation system, which was out of service for extended periods of time during a two-year period. There was not an immediate safety concern because no emergencies requiring use of the facility occurred during that time.

The other apparent violation related to a change the company made to calculations for how much unfiltered air could get into the TSC without a technical basis for such a change. Again, there was not an immediate safety concern because there were no emergencies requiring use of the facility.

Both of the issues that led to the apparent violations have now been corrected.

The two apparent violations have preliminarily been classified as "white." The NRC evaluates regulatory performance at commercial nuclear power plants with a color-coded system which classifies findings as green, white, yellow or red in increasing order of safety significance. A white finding has low to moderate safety significance.

The company also failed to inform the NRC of the EOF's inoperability, an apparent violation of NRC requirements. That violation is being evaluated using the NRC's traditional enforcement process and could result in a civil penalty because it impeded the regulatory process.

The regulatory and pre-decisional enforcement conference is scheduled for Aug. 24 at 8 a.m. EDT in the NRC's Region II office, located at 245 Peachtree Center Ave., NE, Suite 1200, in Atlanta. The public is invited to attend the meeting and NRC officials will be available to answer questions.

No decision on the final safety significance or any possible enforcement action will be made at the regulatory and enforcement conference. Those decisions will be made by NRC officials at a later time.

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