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NRC Schedules Public Meeting April 8 to Discuss Performance of Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting with representatives of NextEra Energy April 8 to discuss the agency's assessment of safety performance for 2013 at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant. The two-unit plant is located in Two Rivers, Wisc., approximately 13 miles northwest of Manitowoc.

The meeting is scheduled for 6-7:30 p.m. CDT at the Two Creeks Town Hall, 5128 East Tapawingo Road, in Two Creeks. The NRC will present its assessment of the plant's 2013 performance, talk about agency activities, and be available to respond to questions or comments from the public.

"NRC inspectors spend a significant amount of time monitoring a wide range of plant activities to ensure the plant operates safely. Our hands-on approach is a key factor in protecting the public and environment," said NRC Region III Administrator Cynthia D. Pederson. "We hold public meetings near the plant every year to make our staff available to answer questions about NRC oversight with those who live near the plant."

The [annual assessment letter](#) sent from the NRC Region III office to plant officials addresses the performance of the plant during 2013 and will serve as the basis for the discussion.

The NRC's assessment of Point Beach's performance for the past year has Unit 1 in Column 3 due to two "white" or low to moderate safety significant findings and Unit 2 in Column 2 because of one "white" finding. One "white" finding affected both units and is associated with the plant's failure to implement external flooding wave run-up protection design features. The second "white" finding involved Unit 1 and is associated with the plant's failure to ensure alignment of the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump. This would have resulted in a failure of the equipment to work when called upon.

The NRC is currently completing a supplemental team inspection for the white findings to assess the plant's understanding of the issues and the effectiveness of the short- and long-term corrective actions to prevent recurrence. The NRC will be issuing an inspection report with conclusions on the plant's actions. The outcome of this inspection will determine in which column the units will reside and the level of inspection effort going forward.

The NRC's action matrix reflects overall plant performance and agency response. There are five columns in the matrix with Column 1 requiring a baseline level of inspections. A move to the other columns results in an increased level of NRC oversight and inspections. The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess nuclear plant performance. The colors start with "green" and then increase to "white," "yellow," or "red," commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. Performance indicators are statistical measurements of plant and equipment performance.

Overall, the NRC found that the Point Beach facility operated safely in 2013 but the decline in performance has resulted in increased oversight and additional inspections to ensure effective corrective actions. Routine inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md.

The most current performance information for Point Beach [Unit 1](#) and [Unit 2](#) is available on the NRC website.