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NRC Schedules Open House May 19 to Discuss Performance of Braidwood and Dresden Nuclear Plants

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold an open house May 19 to discuss the agency's assessment of the Braidwood and Dresden nuclear power plants' operation during 2014. The two-unit Braidwood plant is located in Braceville, Ill., and the two-unit Dresden plant is located in Morris, Ill. Both plants are operated by Exelon Generation Co., and are located approximately 25 miles southwest of Joliet.

The open house is scheduled for 6-7:30 p.m. CDT at Braidwood City Hall, 141 W. Main St., in Braidwood. The NRC staff will be available for informal discussions about the performance of the Braidwood and Dresden plants as well as other topics related to the NRC's regulatory activities.

"We host open houses, which are informal meetings between the NRC staff and the public, to have an open dialogue with local residents about the plant and other NRC-related issues of interest to the public," said NRC Region III Administrator Cynthia D. Pederson. "It is a great opportunity for people to meet our resident inspectors and other staff and a great opportunity for us to speak with people who live near the plant."

The NRC concluded that, overall, Braidwood Units 1 and 2 operated safely in 2014. All performance indicators and inspection findings for Braidwood were "green" and both units remained in Column 1 of the action matrix. As a result, Braidwood Unit 1 and Unit 2 will continue to receive the NRC's normal level of oversight during 2015.

The NRC also concluded that overall, Dresden Unit 2 and Unit 3 operated safely during the past year. All performance indicators for the facility were "green" or of very low risk. Unit 2 remained in Column 1 of the action matrix. However, Unit 3 had one white finding and was moved to Column 2 of the action matrix during the fourth quarter of 2014. The "white" finding was associated with the continued operability of an electromatic relief valve. These valves are designed to operate during an accident scenario in order to reduce reactor pressure. As a result of this finding Unit 3 will receive increased NRC oversight and inspection effort. The NRC found the plant had taken immediate corrective actions to address the issue that led to the "white" finding and the NRC will conduct an additional follow-up inspection later in the year.

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. 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.

Inspections are performed by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to each plant, inspection specialists from the Region III Office in Lisle, Ill., and specialists from the agency’s headquarters in Rockville, Md. Among the areas of performance to be inspected this year by NRC inspectors are activities associated with radiological safety, equipment designs, and emergency preparedness.

The annual assessment letter sent from the NRC Region III office to [Braidwood](#) and [Dresden](#) addresses the performance of the plants during 2014 and serves as the basis for discussions. The most current performance information for Braidwood [Unit 1](#) and [Unit 2](#) as well as Dresden [Unit 2](#) and [Unit 3](#) are available on the NRC website.