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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Friday, January 24, 1997)

NRC SCHEDULES DESIGN INSPECTION EXIT MEETING AT ST. LUCIE PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a public exit meeting at Florida Power & Light's St. Lucie nuclear power plant to discuss the results of a special NRC design inspection at the plant. That meeting will be Tuesday, January 28 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 123 of the plant's Training Building.

The design inspection began in late November and concluded Friday, January 10. The inspection was led by Jeff Jacobson from the NRC's headquarters office in Rockville, Maryland and included six inspectors working under contract to the NRC. The inspection at St. Lucie was the first in a series, and similar inspections will be performed periodically over the next two years at other plants.

The design inspections focus on reviews of the plants' original design and configuration, and conformance with the licensees' safety analysis report. Each inspection team is made up of engineers from NRC and design specialists from either Stone & Webster or Sargent & Lundy, architect/engineering firms with which NRC has contracted.

The NRC planned these inspections after recent findings that licensees at the Millstone plant in Connecticut and at other facilities routinely performed full-core offloads during refueling outages without performing the necessary safety evaluation. It also was discovered that other facilities' actual as-built configuration or operations were inconsistent with the design basis information described in their licenses. Special care is taken to avoid having inspections performed by representatives of the architectural/engineering firm which originally designed a power plant.

During the St. Lucie inspection, no issues were identified that would raise an immediate operability question. A written report on the inspection is expected by late February.

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