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# NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: [opa@nrc.gov](mailto:opa@nrc.gov)

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

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## **NRC ISSUES DRAFT SAFETY EVALUATION FOR CLINTON EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a draft safety evaluation report (SER) for an Early Site Permit (ESP) for the Clinton site, about six miles east of Clinton, Ill.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. The Clinton application was filed Sept. 25, 2003, by Exelon Generation Company, LLC. If approved, the permit would give Exelon up to 20 years to decide whether to build one or more nuclear plants on the site and to file an application with the NRC for approval to begin construction.

NRC staff expect to finalize the safety evaluation later this year, including an ongoing review of Exelon's "performance-based" methodology regarding earthquake effects. A supplement to the draft SER, summarizing the staff's review of seismic issues, is expected by May 31. At that time, the staff will also finalize the schedule for issuing a final SER.

Along with the SER, the staff must complete an Environmental Impact Statement, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards must issue a report on the ESP application, and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel must conclude its hearing on the matter before the Commission can reach a final decision on issuing the ESP. The NRC expects to finish this process by the end of summer 2006.

The 300-page draft SER contains the agency's review of the Clinton ESP application. The NRC staff is reviewing information on:

- site seismology, geology, meteorology and hydrology;
- risks from potential accidents resulting from operation of a nuclear plant at the site;
- the site's ability to support adequate physical security for a nuclear plant; and
- proposed major features of the emergency plan Exelon would implement if a reactor is eventually built at the site.

Exelon will have 14 days to review the draft SER for proprietary information. The report will then be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. It will also be available on the NRC's Web site at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/esp/clinton.html> . In addition, the Vespasian Warner Public Library in Clinton has agreed to make the draft SER available for public inspection.

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