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Contact: Diane Screnci, 610-337-5330

Neil Sheehan, 610-337-5331

NRC to Hold Open House, Meeting on Oct. 9 in Hampton, N.H. on Seabrook Nuclear Plant Concrete Degradation Reviews

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct a public open house and meeting on Oct. 9 to discuss work being done by the Seabrook nuclear power plant's owner to address concrete degradation at the Seabrook, N.H. facility.

The sessions are planned for the Best Western Plus – The Inn at Hampton, at 815 Lafayette Road in Hampton, N.H. The open house is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. and will allow for one-on-one discussions between members of the public and NRC staff on the subject. The formal meeting on the topic between the NRC staff and representatives of Seabrook's owner, NextEra, will start at 6 p.m. and include an opportunity for audience members to ask questions of NRC staff.

“We have held earlier meetings in the vicinity of the Seabrook plant on this subject and received valuable feedback,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “The meeting on October 9th will afford another opportunity for members of the public to learn the status of our reviews in this area and the company's activities to deal with the issue, as well as provide audience members with a chance to once again share their perspectives.”

The concrete degradation at Seabrook is caused by alkali silica reaction, or ASR. This is a chemical combining of reactive silica from the concrete aggregate with the alkali from the cement paste in the presence of moisture. (Aggregates are inert granular materials, such as sand, gravel or crushed stone that, along with water and cement paste, are an essential ingredient in concrete.) The result of the reaction is a gel, which can expand and cause micro-cracks in the concrete.

After the ASR problem was identified at the plant in 2010, the NRC in May 2012 issued a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) to NextEra confirming that it would complete a variety of actions in response to the condition. Since that time, the agency has performed inspections to ensure NextEra was meeting the commitments specified in the CAL.

In an inspection report issued on Aug. 9, the NRC determined that NextEra had met all of the commitments contained in the CAL. However, the NRC is continuing to provide focused oversight of the company's concrete degradation testing program being conducted at the University of Texas – Austin, as well as of the on-site monitoring of ASR progression in the plant's concrete structures.

Based on reviews completed to date, the NRC has found that an acceptable basis has been established to ensure that the continued operability of Seabrook's concrete structures will be maintained. The results of the testing program at the University of Texas will be used to determine the long-term resolution of the ASR issues.

The meeting notice for the Oct. 9th session is available on the NRC's [website](#).

More information about the NRC's reviews of Seabrook concrete degradation can be found on an agency [web page](#) devoted to that topic.