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# ***NRC NEWS***

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

801 Warrenville Road

Lisle IL 60532

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov> E-mail: [opa3@nrc.gov](mailto:opa3@nrc.gov)

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No. III-03-073

December 8, 2003

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## **NRC STAFF TO MEET WITH FIRSTENERGY TO DISCUSS DAVIS-BESSE RESTART**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet December 18 with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company in Oak Harbor, Ohio, to discuss the possible startup of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant. The plant, located near Oak Harbor, has been shut down since February of last year.

A second meeting will be held that day to present the preliminary findings of the NRC's inspection reviewing management and human performance at Davis-Besse, including the safety culture of the plant staff.

The safety culture inspection meeting will be at 1:30 p.m. in the Davis-Besse Administration Building, 5503 North State Route 2, Oak Harbor.

The restart meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in the Camp Perry Clubhouse, 1000 Lawrence Road, Bldg. 600, on Highway 2 west of Port Clinton. A picture identification is required to enter Camp Perry; the guards will provide visitors with directions to the meeting site.

The public is invited to observe the business portion of each meeting and will have an opportunity to make comments and ask questions of the NRC staff before the meetings are adjourned.

The restart meeting schedule is contingent on the Davis-Besse plant beginning preparations for startup which involve gradually building up heat and pressure in the reactor cooling system using the reactor cooling pumps. If these activities are delayed, the restart meeting and the safety culture meeting may be rescheduled.

The NRC Restart Readiness Assessment Team Inspection, which began December 8, will observe the plant operating staff as it makes the transition from Mode 5 (known as cold shutdown) to Mode 4 and Mode 3, which reflects increasing temperatures in the reactor cooling system. The utility may not start up the reactor (Mode 2) without NRC approval.

At the 6 p.m. restart meeting, FirstEnergy will present the basis for its request to the NRC for authorization to restart the Davis-Besse plant. It will also discuss its assessment of the performance of the operating staff during the initial heatup process.

There will be no decision on possible restart during the meeting. In evaluating FirstEnergy's request for restart, the NRC's Davis-Besse Oversight Panel will review the information presented by the company, along with the results of NRC inspections over the past 21 months.

The panel will submit its recommendation to James Caldwell, Regional Administrator for NRC Region III. Mr. Caldwell will make a decision on the possible restart after conferring with other senior NRC officials. The decision will be based on the agency's assessment of the ability of FirstEnergy to start up and operate the plant safely.

Extensive information on the NRC's regulatory activities at Davis-Besse are available on the agency's web site: <http://www.nrc.gov> - select "Davis-Besse" from the key topics menu.

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## **NRC OVERSIGHT PANEL TO DISCUSS DAVIS-BESSE CORRECTIVE ACTION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's staff will meet with FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company officials on Wednesday, December 10, to discuss the utility's plans for improvements to its implementation of the corrective action program at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant. The plant, which has been shut down since February 16 of last year, is located in Oak Harbor, Ohio.

The meeting will be held at 9 a.m. CDT (10 a.m. EDT) at the NRC's Region III office, 801 Warrenville Road, in Lisle, Illinois. Visitors should report first to the Second Floor reception area. The public is invited to observe the business portion of the meeting and will have an opportunity to make comments and ask questions of the NRC staff before the meeting is adjourned.

Interested individuals unable to attend may listen to the meeting via telephone. The tollfree number will be announced when it is available and posted on the NRC web site. The meeting will also be available for public viewing by video conference at the NRC Headquarters, Room T-2B5 One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. The meeting will be transcribed, and the transcript will be posted on the NRC website in several weeks.

At the meeting FirstEnergy will describe planned improvements in the corrective action program as a result of the NRC's Corrective Action Team Inspection which reviewed the company's program to find and fix problems at the Davis-Besse plant. The preliminary results of the inspection were discussed during the November 12 public meeting between the NRC Davis-Besse Oversight Panel and FirstEnergy, and the report is in preparation.

The Oversight Panel requested the December 10 meeting as part of its ongoing review of the findings of the inspection. During the November 12 meeting, FirstEnergy provided general information addressing the inspection findings. The Panel is seeking additional details and clarification of the company's plans to improve the corrective action program.

The NRC oversight panel, created on April 29 of last year, includes NRC management and staff from its Region III office in Lisle, Illinois; the NRC Headquarters office in Rockville, Maryland; and the NRC Resident Inspector Office at the Davis-Besse site.

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