



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC ISSUES MID-CYCLE ASSESSMENTS FOR NATION'S NUCLEAR PLANTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued mid-cycle assessment letters to the nation's 104 operating commercial nuclear power plants. As of the end of June, 96 plants were in the two highest performance categories.

"We ensure nuclear power plants are safe, inspecting them and rating their performance regularly, as part of our mission to protect people and the environment," said Ho Nieh, director of the Division of Inspection and Regional Support in the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

Of the 96 highest-performing reactors, 62 fully met all safety and security performance objectives and were inspected by NRC using the normal inspection program. Thirty-four reactors were assessed as needing to resolve one or two items of low safety significance. This represents an increase from the previous assessment cycle. The NRC is confident, however, that the regulatory actions dictated by the Reactor Oversight Process action matrix are appropriate for these plants with one or two items of low safety significance. For this performance level, regulatory oversight includes additional inspection and attention to follow up on corrective actions.

These plants requiring additional inspection are: Braidwood 2 (Ill.); Browns Ferry 2 and 3 (Ala.); Brunswick 1 and 2 (N.C.); Callaway (Mo.); Calvert Cliffs 1 and 2 (Md.); Crystal River 3 (Fla.); Farley 1 and 2 (Ala.); Fermi 2 (Ohio); Limerick 2 (Pa.); Millstone 2 (Conn.); North Anna 1 and 2 (Va.); Palo Verde 1, 2 and 3 (Ariz.); Pilgrim (Mass.); Point Beach 1 and 2 (Wis.); Prairie Island 1 and 2 (Minn.); River Bend (La.); San Onofre 2 and 3 (Calif.); Seabrook (N.H.); Susquehanna 1 (Pa.); Turkey Point 3 and 4 (Fla.); Waterford (La.); Watts Bar (Tenn.) and Wolf Creek (Kans.). (Callaway, Calvert 1 and 2, Crystal River 3, Limerick 2, Waterford, and Watts Bar have resolved their issues since the reporting period ended and have transitioned to the highest performing level.)

Six nuclear reactors were in the third performance category with a degraded level of performance. For this category, regulatory oversight includes more NRC inspections, senior management attention and oversight focused on the cause of the degraded performance. These plants were: Hope Creek (N.J.); Palisades (Mich.); Perry 1 (Ohio); Saint Lucie 2 (Fla.) and Salem 1 and 2 (N.J.).

One reactor, Browns Ferry 1 in Alabama, is in the fourth performance category and requires increased oversight due to a safety finding of high significance, which will include additional inspections to confirm the plant's performance issues are being addressed.

Fort Calhoun plant in Nebraska is in an extended shutdown with significant performance issues and is currently under a special NRC oversight program distinct from the normal performance levels. Therefore the plant will not receive a mid-cycle assessment letter.

In addition to regular inspections, the NRC is currently conducting extra inspections to assess all plants' preparedness to deal with earthquakes and floods. These additional inspections are part of the NRC's post-Fukushima actions.

The NRC routinely provides changes to information on each plant's current performance and posts the latest information as it becomes available to the [action matrix summary](#). The mid-cycle assessment letters sent to each operating reactor licensee are also available through the NRC's Web page on the [Reactor Oversight Process](#). Mid-cycle construction assessments for new reactors at the [Vogtle and Summer sites](#) and at [Watts Bar 2](#) are also on the NRC website.

Every six months each plant receives either a mid-cycle or annual assessment letter along with an NRC inspection plan. This year's mid-cycle assessments also include security findings after the recent reintegration of the security cornerstone into the Reactor Oversight Process action matrix.

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