



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

www.nrc.gov

No. I-04-045

CONTACT: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

October 12, 2004

Email: opa1@nrc.gov

ASLB TO HEAR ORAL ARGUMENTS ON PETITIONS SEEKING HEARINGS ON PROPOSED VERMONT YANKEE POWER UPRATE

An Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) plans to hear oral arguments on Oct. 21 and, if needed, Oct. 22 regarding two requests for hearings on a proposed power uprate at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, located in Vernon, Vt. The proceedings are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. in the Maria Lawrence Room at the Vermont Agricultural Business Education Center, 157 Old Guilford Road in Brattleboro, Vt.

Directions to the center are available on its web site at www.vabec.com or by calling the facility at 802-257-4755.

Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee, LLC, which operates the plant, is seeking permission from the NRC to increase the reactor's power output by 20 percent. To do so, its operating license must be amended. An amendment application was submitted to the NRC late last year and deemed complete as of late January. The NRC is currently reviewing that filing and will not grant approval unless the agency concludes the changes can be safely implemented.

The request for the amendment created an opportunity for those with concerns about the power uprate to request a hearing. On Aug. 30, the Vermont Department of Public Service and the New England Coalition filed petitions with the NRC requesting a hearing on a number of issues. The ASLB, which is part of the NRC but renders decisions independently of the agency's staff, conducts all licensing and other hearings as directed by the Commission that oversees the NRC. An ASLB panel has been designated to review the Vermont Yankee petitions and determine whether a hearing is warranted.

During the oral arguments, the ASLB will hear from participants on such issues as standing, admissibility of contentions and other preliminary issues to assist the board in expeditiously deciding such matters. Participants will include representatives of the Vermont Department of Public Service, the New England Coalition, NRC staff and Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee.

While statements from the general public will not be heard at this time, such statements may be heard in the future. However, any interested individual may file a written statement setting forth his or her position on the issues in this proceeding. These statements may be submitted at any time by mail, e-mail or fax. Statements should be mailed to: The Office of the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudication Staff, with a copy to Alex S. Karlin, Chairman of the ASLB panel at: Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T-3 F23, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001. E-mailed statements should be sent to the Office of the Secretary at hearingdocket@nrc.gov , with a copy to the panel Chairman at ask2@nrc.gov . Statements can be faxed to the Office of the Secretary at 301-415-1966, with a copy to the panel Chairman at 301-415-7550.

There will be other opportunities for the public to offer comments to the NRC on the uprate proposal, including an upcoming exit meeting for an engineering inspection conducted by the agency at the plant in August.

###