



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Region IV

612 E. Lamar Blvd., Suite 400

Arlington, TX 76011-4125

Telephone: (817) 860-8128

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No. IV-11-038

Contact: Victor Dricks (817) 860-8128

Lara Uselding (817) 276-6519

August 24, 2011

E-Mail: OPA4.Resource@nrc.gov

NRC ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER TO ENTERGY WITH ACTIONS TO IMPROVE QUALITY CONTROL AND EMPLOYEE CONCERNS PROGRAMS

Entergy Operations, Inc. and Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. have agreed to implement actions to ensure the effectiveness of the quality control programs and safety conscious work environment at 11 nuclear power plants under an agreement with the NRC. This includes Arkansas Nuclear One Units 1 and 2, James Fitzpatrick, Grand Gulf, Indian Point Units 2 and 3, Palisades, Pilgrim, River Bend, Vermont Yankee, and Waterford 3 nuclear power stations.

In 2009, NRC received a complaint from an employee, at the River Bend Station in Louisiana, who claimed retaliation after questioning inspection activities that were thought to be part of the plant's quality control program. Entergy chose to resolve the matter using the NRC's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process in which a neutral mediator assists parties in reaching an agreement.

As a result of the ADR agreement, Entergy agreed to take fleet-wide actions to reinforce the company's commitment to a safety conscious work environment (SCWE) and to reorganize the quality control reporting chain of command. Some of the SCWE actions include strengthening training for employees and new supervisors concerning reporting of safety concerns; and improving the employee concerns programs. Entergy also agreed to conduct a safety culture survey at River Bend.

"We are pleased with the outcome of the arbitration process in order to reach a final agreement that protects the public and the environment. The fleet-wide actions being taken by the licensee and the organizational structural change will complement the licensee's previous actions," said Roy Zimmerman Director of the NRC's Office of Enforcement.

Quality control programs are important in ensuring safe plant operations and include independent verifications and inspections of maintenance activities and modifications to plant equipment. NRC inspectors confirmed that there were no actual impacts on plant equipment at the Entergy sites.

Entergy has initiated additional actions designed to ensure that employees feel free to raise concerns without fear of retaliation. The company undertook several actions relating to its employee concerns program; a program designed to investigate and manage a variety of concerns, including claims of retaliation. Entergy is conducting employee concerns program training, reviewing past cases involving any retaliation claims and making improvements to the program's procedures.

Copies of the confirmatory order will be posted on the NRC [website](#).

###

News releases are available through a free [listserv subscription](#) or by clicking on the [EMAIL UPDATES](#) link on the NRC homepage (www.nrc.gov). E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's website.