Settlement Reached On Power Plant

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) - Intervenors in the licensing procedure for the River Bend nuclear power plant have informed the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board they have reached a tentative settlement regarding the plant's emergency planning.

The intervenor's objections to the emergency plan had revolved around whether school buses could do an adequate job of evacuating people on short notice, how the evacuation of jails, prisons and hospitals should be handled and questions about the authority of various agencies to handle tasks assigned to them by the plan.

Changes have been made that satisfy the intervenors on several points and the intervenors decided to drop others because of a lack of resources, said Steve Irving, one of the lawyers for the intervenors.

The settlement will make formal litigation on the state's emergency plan unnecessary, but does not affect other safety questions that have been raised by the group and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The safety contentions raised by the intervenors will be the subject of a hearing next month at which the general public will also have a chance to comment on safety issues.

Rick Walker, who is handling the matter for the Department of Environmental Quality, said any comment on the specifics of the changes would be premature. The parties involved will meet next week to review the changes and make sure they are satisfactory, he said.