

DATE: May 7, 2003

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-03-025

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region IV staff on this date.

Facility

Energy Northwest
Columbia Generating Station, Unit 2
Richland, WA 99352

Docket: 50-397
License: NPF-21

Licensee Emergency Classification

☐ Notification of Unusual Event
☐ Alert
☐ Site Area Emergency
☐ General Emergency
☒ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF ENERGY NORTHWEST SECURITY OFFICER
INFORMATIONAL PICKET AND FORCED SHUTDOWN BECAUSE OF MAIN
CONDENSER INLEAKAGE

DESCRIPTION:

On May 6, 2003, three local television affiliates and a news paper provided coverage of an informational picket by Energy Northwest (Columbia Generating Station) off-duty security officers. The security officers established an informational picket approximately 10 miles from the site. The picket was limited to Tuesday, May 6, 2003. The security contract expired on November 1, 2002; however, the licensee and the security officers continue to operate under the conditions of the existing contract until a new contract is approved. The security officers are state employees, in essential positions, and therefore are prohibited by state law from striking. The negotiation process provides for mediation and arbitration if necessary. The media reports indicated that the areas under review include pay raises to be comparable with federal officers at Hanford and in-the-field training. The informational picket did not impact plant operations. Energy Northwest management and union officials are currently engaged in mediation.

During this period the plant was in cold shut down. The licensee shut down the plant on May 4, 2003, because of leakage from the circulating water system into the main condenser. Prior to the shut down, the plant was in coastdown operations preparing for a refueling outage. The plant will remain shut down and will begin the scheduled refueling outage on May 9 at 12:01 a.m. PDT.

The state of Washington will be informed.

The licensee issued a news release of the plant shutdown on May 5, 2003.

Region IV received initial notification of the plant shutdown from the senior resident inspector on May 4 and of the security officers' intention to conduct an informational picket on May 5. Region IV has informed the OEDO, NRR, and PA.

This information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of May 7, at 8:45 a.m. PDT.

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