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NRC CONDUCTING SPECIAL INSPECTION AT OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is conducting a special inspection at the Oconee nuclear station to assess the circumstances associated with high vibrations experienced by three Unit 1 reactor coolant pumps on April 12 while shutting down for a refueling outage. The Oconee plant is located near Seneca, S.C. and is operated by Duke Energy.

“This inspection is being conducted to better understand the underlying reasons for these vibrations during the plant cooldown” said NRC Region II Acting Administrator Victor McCree. “The abnormally high vibrations seen on the three operating reactor coolant pumps during the plant cooldown have potential common causes that should be further investigated.” He added that a simultaneous small leakage from one pump and indications of degraded conditions in a second pump were also of interest to the NRC.

The NRC decided a special inspection was warranted because of the operational and generic aspects of the issue.

The inspection began Monday, April 28 and is expected to take several days. A report will be issued about 30 days after the completion of the inspection and will be available at that time on the agency’s website at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html .

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