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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS STATUS OF AUGMENTED INSPECTION AT RIVER BEND STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public meeting on July 11 to discuss the preliminary findings of the Augmented Inspection conducted at the River Bend nuclear power plant after an electrical switchgear malfunction forced operators to power down the reactor on May 24. The plant, operated by Entergy Operations, is located 24 miles northwest of Baton Rouge.

The meeting will be held between 4 and 5:30 p.m. at the River Bend Station Training Center, 5485 US Highway 61, in St. Francisville, La. The meeting is open to the public and members of the NRC staff will be available to answer questions from the public after the business portion of the meeting.

On May 24, plant operators shut down the reactor after an electrical fault occurred in a main feedwater pump. The plant was operating at 33 percent power at the time. Protective relays should have isolated the electrical fault. Instead, in a cascading effect, other pieces of equipment were affected, causing a complete loss of non-safety related cooling water to the plant.

The team included fire protection, electrical, and operations specialists and they reviewed the licensee's actions in response to the incident. The team will issue a written report 30 days after the meeting that will be publicly available. The report will identify areas for further inspection follow-up.

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