NRC NEWS
U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO PRESENT ITS FINDINGS ON GAS BURN IN SPENT FUEL CASK AT POINT BEACH NUCLEAR PLANT

A Nuclear Regulatory Commission Augmented Inspection Team will meet Friday (June 7) with Wisconsin Electric Power Company officials to discuss the findings of its review of a hydrogen gas burn in a spent fuel storage container May 28 at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Station. The Station is near Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

The meeting will be at 10 a.m. in the Two Creeks Town Hall, located at State Highway 42 and Tapawingo Road north of Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

The six-person inspection team is headed by Roy Caniano, a Branch Chief from the NRC's Region III Office. Dr. Carl Paperiello, Director of the NRC's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, and other NRC staff members will also attend the meeting.

The hydrogen gas burn occurred as technicians were beginning to weld a shield lid on the spent fuel storage container after it was loaded with 24 fuel assemblies. There was no evidence of damage to the storage container or to the fuel assemblies as a result of the gas burn.

The spent fuel assemblies were subsequently placed back in the spent fuel storage pool.

The investigation into the cause of the incident is focussing on a zinc-based coating used on internal surfaces of the container. The coating may have reacted chemically with the acidic water from the spent fuel storage pool to produce hydrogen.

The meeting between the NRC staff and Wisconsin Electric officials will be open to public observation. At the close of the meeting there will be an opportunity for questions and comments from members of the public.

The team will issue a written report in several weeks.