

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Region III Office of Public Affairs
801 Warrenville Road, Lisle IL 60532-4351

NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT: RIII-96-17

May 16, 1996

CONTACT: Jan Strasma 708/829-9663
Angela Dauginas 708/829-9662
E-mail: opa3@nrc.gov

NRC DISPATCHES SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO DRESDEN NUCLEAR PLANT
TO REVIEW REACTOR SHUTDOWN ON MAY 15

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has dispatched a special inspection team to review the circumstances surrounding the automatic reactor shutdown Wednesday at Unit 3 of the Dresden Nuclear Power Station.

The station, operated by Commonwealth Edison Company, is near Morris, Illinois. Dresden Unit 2, the other operating unit at the station, was not affected by the shutdown.

The Unit 3 reactor shut down automatically Wednesday morning, May 15, when the flow of water into the reactor was interrupted. A backup cooling water system started immediately to continue pumping water into the reactor.

There was no danger to the public or plant personnel and no release of radioactivity associated with the shutdown.

The initial investigation by the utility indicated that a flow regulating valve in the feedwater system had failed, shutting off the flow of water. A parallel regulating valve was out of service because of a leak.

The six-person special inspection team includes staff from the NRC Region III Office in Lisle, Illinois, and the NRC Headquarters in Rockville, Maryland. The NRC resident inspectors were at the plant when the shutdown occurred and monitored the utility's handling of the incident.

At the conclusion of the inspection -- expected to last at least several days -- the team will meet with utility officials to discuss the inspection findings. This meeting will be open to the public. The time and place of the meeting will be announced later.

#