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FOR IMMEDIATE
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NRC TO HOLD OPEN ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE
AUGUST 26 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ENTERGY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a predecisional enforcement conference Monday, August 26, with officials of Entergy Operations Inc., the operator of Arkansas Nuclear One near Russellville, Ark. The parties will discuss apparent violations of NRC requirements involving inadequate maintenance procedures for the plant's main steam safety valves.

The conference will begin at 1 p.m. at NRC Region IV offices in Arlington, Texas. The meeting will be open to public observation; NRC officials will be available afterwards for questions.

The apparent violations were identified during an NRC inspection conducted July 12 to August 2 at ANO Units 1 & 2. This inspection followed an Augmented Inspection Team visit May 22-24, scheduled after Unit 1 experienced an automatic reactor shut down on May 19.

During that shutdown, at about 3:30 a.m., one main steam safety valve stuck open allowing one of two steam generators to boil dry. Plant operators declared a Notice of Unusual Event (NOUE), the lowest of four NRC-mandated alert conditions, during the incident. The shut-down plant was stable at normal temperature at about 4:30 a.m., and by 9 a.m. the dry steam generator was refilled with water. The NOUE was canceled at about 1 p.m. No radiation was released from the plant.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that NRC has made a final determination that violations did occur or that enforcement action, such as a monetary fine, will be taken. The purpose is to discuss the apparent violations, their causes and safety significance, and to provide Entergy officials an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report and present corrective actions that have been taken.

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No decision on the apparent violations or any contemplated enforcement action, such as a civil penalty, will be made at this conference. Those decisions will be made by senior NRC officials at a later time.

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