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FOR IMMEDIATE

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**NRC TO MEET WITH WNP-2 TO DISCUSS
MARCH 11 AUTOMATIC SHUTDOWN**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with officials of the Washington Public Power Supply System, operators of WNP-2, a nuclear power plant near Richland, Washington, to discuss the results of a special inspection conducted after an automatic plant shutdown from full power on March 11.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 8 at 3 p.m. in the WPPSS Multipurpose Facility at 3000 George Washington Way in Richland. The public is invited to observe the meeting; however participation will be limited to NRC and WPPSS officials. NRC staff will be available afterward for questions.

During the automatic shutdown plant safety equipment functioned to shut the reactor down to a safe condition with no damage to safety-related components. However, preliminary results of the inspection indicate that plant operators did not fully understand all of the actions that took place during the event and may not have responded as expected in some cases. These problems were addressed and corrected prior to restarting the plant by additional operator training.

Minor irregularities in equipment function and indications also were noted by the inspection team and will be discussed at the meeting. These irregularities also were addressed and corrected prior to restart.

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The event was initiated when an air line ruptured causing one of four main steam isolation valves to fail shut. This started a complex chain of events that included a main generator shutdown, a reactor trip, or SCRAM, and the automatic initiation of certain Engineered Safety Features and the emergency core cooling system that are designed to automatically switch on when plant parameters such as containment pressure and reactor water level vary from normal operating limits. This event is one that the plant is designed to sustain and should be a fundamental part of operator training and experience.

The purpose of the meeting is to apprise WNP-2 officials of the initial findings of the inspection team. The appropriateness of enforcement will be decided by senior NRC managers after further consideration of the inspection results following Wednesday's meeting.

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