



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO REVIEW INCIDENT AT UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH REACTOR

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing the circumstances surrounding a second incident in recent months at the University of Missouri nuclear non-power research reactor in Columbia.

A supervisor and two inspectors from the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, on site for a previously scheduled inspection, will review an incident this week that involved the removal of a control rod from the shutdown reactor apparently without following the required procedures. The rod is used to control the reactor's power.

The NRC was notified of the incident by officials of the University of Missouri, the licensee of the facility. The reactor remained shut down for a period to enable the university to evaluate the incident.

Conference calls between NRC officials and licensee management were held June 13 and 14 to discuss the apparent root cause of the incident, the corrective actions taken and the licensee's decision process for restarting the reactor, which took place on June 15.

A similar maintenance procedural incident occurred at the reactor two months earlier. The licensee has indicated that there were no adverse effects from that event. The licensee is still evaluating this week's incident. The NRC staff's evaluation of long-term corrective actions for both events continues.

Non-power reactors, whose function is research and development, are used in almost every field of science, including physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, geology, archeology and environmental sciences.

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