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NRC DISPATCHES SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO SEABROOK NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is sending a special inspection team to the Seabrook nuclear power plant to review the plant operator's response to a disabled emergency diesel generator. The problem was discovered recently at the reactor in Seabrook, N.H., which is operated by North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (NAESCO).

One member of the team, an NRC resident inspector at the plant, is already on site. Other members of the four-man team are expected to arrive next week. The team will monitor and assess the company's root cause evaluation and corrective actions, independently evaluate the risk significance of the problem, and determine whether there are generic implications.

Between October 29 and November 1, the company unsuccessfully attempted to conduct a required test on one of the plant's 2 emergency diesel generators. During the November 1 test, operators in the diesel room noted a flash and heavy smoke from one of the diesels. According to NAESCO, the diesel sustained some damage. The plant remains shutdown, in a refueling outage, with the fuel removed from the vessel. There were no other consequences and no other equipment was affected.

The NRC team will issue a written report, which will be available to the public, several weeks after the completion of the inspection.

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