



NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II

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NRC STAFF DETERMINES VIOLATION AT SUMMER NUCLEAR PLANT TO BE OF LOW TO MODERATE SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has determined that a violation of NRC regulations at the South Carolina Electric & Gas Company Summer nuclear plant, near Jenkinsville, South Carolina, should be characterized as White, meaning that it is an issue with low to moderate importance to safety but one which may require additional NRC inspections.

The violation, involving the Summer plant's steam-driven emergency feedwater pump being inoperable during power operation for about 48 days, had preliminarily been characterized by the NRC staff as Yellow (an issue with substantial importance to safety), but risk information provided by the company and evaluated by the NRC staff led to the change in safety significance.

Under the significance determination process, NRC officials classify certain conditions at nuclear power plants as being in one of four colors which delineate increasing levels of severity, beginning with green and progressing in severity to white, yellow or red. The Summer plant has two electric motor-driven emergency feedwater pumps, and another which is steam-driven, for use in the event of an interruption in the normal feedwater flow to the unit's three steam generators. Although no abnormal conditions occurred during the period in question, had there been a loss of feedwater and both of the electric motor-driven pumps, use of the steam-driven pump would have been important in removing heat from the reactor's uranium fuel.

Because this violation falls into the regulatory response band of the NRC's oversight process, the Summer plant may be subject to increased NRC oversight such as additional meetings or inspections. The agency will determine the most appropriate response and notify SCE&G when that determination has been made.

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