

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-02-032

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of possible safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by Region II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility

Duke Energy Corporation
McGuire Nuclear Station, Unit 2
Huntersville, North Carolina
Dockets/License: 50-370

Licensee Emergency Classification

X	Notification of Unusual Event Alert Site Area Emergency General Emergency Not Applicable
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Subject: NOTIFICATION OF UNUSUAL EVENT (NOUE) DUE TO FIRE IN TURBINE BUILDING - MCGUIRE
(Event Number 39145)

On August 22, 2002, at 4:36 p.m., a manual reactor trip was initiated on McGuire Unit 2 in response to a fire from a leak in a hydrogen dryer associated with the Unit 2 turbine generator. Three minutes earlier, a loud noise was heard and a fire was reported in the Unit 2 turbine building one level below the turbine. In response to the fire alarm, the automatic suppression system actuated. Reactor operators noticed decreasing main generator hydrogen pressure and attempted a rapid downpower, but, subsequently tripped the Unit in anticipation of the loss of main generator hydrogen cooling. The licensee declared a NOUE at 4:50 p.m. due to the fire existing for greater than 15 minutes. The plant fire brigade responded to the hydrogen dryer fire and provided cover suppression to allow access to the dryer's local supply valves in order to isolate the hydrogen leak. The fire was considered extinguished at 4:55 p.m., and the NOUE was terminated at 6:30 p.m.

The manual reactor trip occurred without any significant safety equipment problems, however, the unit experienced elevated steam generator water levels. Unit 2 was stabilized in Mode 3 (Hot Standby), where it currently remains. The licensee is troubleshooting the cause of the elevated steam generator water levels, and is reviewing the operation of the pressurizer master controller during the transient. Although fire damage appears to be localized at the hydrogen dryer, the licensee is conducting evaluations of adjacent condensate system piping for heat damage, as well as assessing the effects of actuating the fire suppression systems (emulsifier and hose water spray) on equipment adjacent to and below the fire location. Unit 1, which is currently operating at full power, was unaffected by the fire.

The licensee continues its investigation into the root cause of the fire. However, preliminary indications are that the fire started when a drain plug on the hydrogen dryer blew out after being tightened by a technician to correct a small leak from around the plug. The technician suffered minor burns to an extremity and was subsequently taken to the local hospital for treatment and then released.

NRC resident inspectors responded to the event and evaluated the unit shutdown, the condition of equipment affected by the fire, and fire brigade response. The resident inspectors are continuing to followup on this event and the licensee's recovery activities.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence by the NRC senior resident inspector at McGuire on August 22, 2002. This information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee/State and is current as of 12:30 p.m., on August 23, 2002.

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