



NRC NEWS

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

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NRC SAYS FLORIDA NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS PREPARED FOR HURRICANE CHARLEY

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials in Atlanta said Friday morning that Florida's three commercial nuclear power plants have made preparations for response to Hurricane Charley.

Charles A. Casto, acting Regional Administrator of the agency's Region II office in Atlanta, said the NRC has activated its Atlanta Incident Response Center to monitor and assist Florida's nuclear power plants at Crystal River, St. Lucie, and Turkey Point. He said additional NRC personnel have already been dispatched where needed to the plants and to Florida's Emergency Response Center in Tallahassee.

Casto said Friday morning that the agency's primary focus is on the Crystal River nuclear power plant, located about 90 miles north of Tampa on the Gulf coast. He said the plant has declared a Notice of Unusual Event, the lowest of NRC's emergency declarations, and is prepared to shut down if necessary. The Unusual Event declaration is routine in the event of a hurricane, and the plant's procedures require that it be shut down should hurricane winds reach Category III, which is 111 miles per hour or higher. The plant has emergency diesel generators available if needed and has additional diesel generators, normally used in routine operations, and emergency battery power available should the need arise.

The Crystal River nuclear power plant is elevated some 20 feet above sea level, he said, above any predicted storm surge. It is part of a power generating complex near the town of Crystal River which contains four coal-fired plants in addition to the nuclear unit.

Casto said the NRC regional office in Atlanta will maintain close contact with the agency's Washington, D. C. headquarters, Florida state officials and the plant sites until the hurricane threat has passed.

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