



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION BEGINS SPECIAL INSPECTION AT KEWAUNEE NUCLEAR PLANT FOLLOWING SHUTDOWN

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has begun a special inspection at the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant following the shutdown of the facility late Wednesday (April 26) which involved problems with several non-nuclear components. The plant, located at Kewaunee, Wis., is operated by Dominion Generation Co.

The plant was shut down safely, and there was no hazard to plant workers or the general public.

Operators were preparing to shut the plant down to repair a leak in the cooling system piping for one of the emergency diesel generators when the problems occurred.

During the gradual shutdown, a pump in the secondary cooling system stopped unexpectedly while the plant was at about 35 percent power. The pump stoppage should have caused the main steam turbine to shut down, which, in turn, would have led to an automatic reactor shutdown.

When the main steam turbine failed to shut down, plant operators manually shut down the turbine and the reactor promptly. All reactor safety systems then functioned as designed.

The utility declared an Alert under its emergency plan because the turbine and reactor did not shut down automatically and led to operator action for the manual shutdown. Had the operators not taken manual action, other safety circuits would have subsequently triggered an automatic shutdown.

An Alert is the second lowest of NRC's four emergency classifications. The NRC initially monitored the event from its headquarters Operations Center in Rockville, Md. The NRC senior resident inspector was dispatched to the plant to directly monitor plant activities, and the agency staffed its incident response center at its Lisle, Ill., regional office.

The NRC inspectors will review the equipment problems associated with the shutdown and the actions taken by plant operators to shut down the reactor and maintain it in a safe condition. The agency will also monitor the repairs being made to the piping for the emergency diesel generator cooling system.

The NRC special inspection team will issue its report about 30 days after the completion of the inspection. The report will be available from the Region III Office of Public Affairs or in the agency's

online document library at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> . (Use Docket Number 05000305).

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