

DCS No.: 05000271060524
Date: May 25, 2006

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-06-009

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 the Region I staff on this date.

Facility

Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
P.O. Box 0500
185 Old Ferry Road
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0500

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

Docket No.: 05-271
License No.: DPR - 28

SUBJECT: VERMONT YANKEE UNUSUAL EVENT DUE TO INDICATIONS OF FIRE IN ELECTRICAL SWITCHGEAR ROOM

On May 24, 2006, at 9:02 p.m., Vermont Yankee declared an Unusual Event due to indications of a fire in an electrical switchgear room for greater than 10 minutes. The plant's automatic fire suppression system for the switchgear room actuated due to the detection of smoke in the room. The preliminary cause of the source of the smoke was subsequently identified to be the heating of a rectifier bank on top of the switchgear. The rectifier was heating by design as a result of a ground on a non-safety related condensate pump motor. The licensee stated the heating of the rectifier caused dust on the device to actuate three smoke detectors. The licensee's initial review indicates there was no damage internal or external to the condensate pump breaker cubicle. In accordance with the station procedure for responding to a fire in the switchgear room and in preparation for securing the condensate pump, control room operators reduced reactor power from 100 percent to 57 percent. The condensate pump was then shutdown from the control room to deenergize the breaker.

The Town of Vernon Fire Department and Rescue Inc. (an ambulance service located in Brattleboro, Vermont) were contacted, as a precaution, and responded to the site.

After conducting an inspection of the electrical switchgear room to confirm that no safety-related equipment was affected and that the condensate pump breaker was deenergized, the licensee terminated the Unusual Event at 10:20 p.m. The plant is currently stable at approximately 75 percent power while the licensee conducts an assessment of the event and completes any necessary repairs.

The senior resident inspector responded to the site upon notification by the licensee. Communication was established with senior NRC management via the NRC management bridge. The facts of this Preliminary Notification were verified with the General Manager of Plant Operations.

The Region 1 Public Affairs Office has responded to media inquiries. The licensee has issued a press release. The states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts have been informed.

ADAMS Accession Number: ML061450391

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