



NRC NEWS

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NRC SENDS SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO BRUNSWICK NUCLEAR PLANT TO ASSESS AND INSPECT UNIT 1 VALVE FAILURE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has dispatched a Special Inspection Team to the Brunswick nuclear power plant, operated by Progress Energy near Southport on the southeastern coast of North Carolina. The team will inspect and assess circumstances associated with a July 26th failure of a valve in the cooling water system for one of the redundant loops of the Unit 1 Residual Heat Removal, or RHR, system. The RHR system is used to remove decay heat, and in an accident, it can also be used to inject water into the reactor core.

On July 26th, two RHR service water pumps tripped on low suction pressure, and Progress Energy declared that loop of the system inoperable. Plant employees determined that a water supply valve had failed, and after an analysis and repairs to the valve, that loop of the RHR system was declared operable again.

NRC officials said that Progress Energy repaired the valve quickly and there was no threat to public health and safety at any time.

The NRC's two-person Special Inspection Team is developing a sequence of events related to the valve failure; reviewing the company's response to earlier information the NRC issued on these valves; assessing the plant staff's analysis, maintenance and corrective actions on the valves; and identifying any generic issues for Brunswick or other nuclear plants.

The special inspection is expected to take about a week, and the NRC will issue a report within 30 days of the completion of the inspection.

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