



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO MEET WITH SOUTHERN NUCLEAR ABOUT INSPECTION FINDING AT FARLEY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a meeting with Southern Nuclear Operating Company officials to discuss an inspection finding at the Farley nuclear power plant near Dothan, Ala.

The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 12, at 10:00 a.m. in the NRC Region II office, Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street in Atlanta, Ga. The meeting is open to observation by members of the public and the press.

The NRC has preliminarily determined that an inspection finding at the Farley nuclear power plant related to valves associated with the Unit 2 residual heat removal system containment suction supply is "yellow," meaning the issue may have substantial safety significance that could result in additional NRC inspections and potentially other NRC action.

Under the NRC reactor oversight process, inspection findings are evaluated using a significance determination process and assigned a color indicating its safety significance. Findings with very low safety significance are labeled "green." "White" findings have low to moderate safety significance, "yellow" findings have substantial safety significance, and "red" findings have high safety significance.

The NRC staff completed a special inspection in May that reviewed the circumstances surrounding Unit 2 residual heat removal containment sump suction valve failures which occurred during surveillance testing in April 2006 and January 2007. During that inspection, the NRC identified a failure to promptly identify and correct the condition, and the finding was determined to involve a violation of NRC requirements. The "yellow" finding is preliminary and this meeting permits Southern Nuclear an opportunity to discuss the issue with the NRC before NRC makes a final decision regarding the safety significance of the finding.

According to NRC officials, the condition does not present a current safety concern because Southern Nuclear took interim corrective actions to ensure the valve operates properly after the failure in January and took long-term corrective actions during a refueling outage this spring.

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