

August 31, 2009

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-IV-09-004A

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 IV, Arlington, Texas, staff on this date.

**Facility**

Energy Northwest  
Columbia Generating Station  
Docket: 50-397 License: NPF-21

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

SUBJECT: COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION STARTUP FOLLOWING AN AUTOMATIC REACTOR SCRAM DUE TO A TURBINE TRIP AND DECLARATION OF AN UNUSUAL EVENT DUE TO POSSIBLE TOXIC GAS (UPDATE)

DESCRIPTION:

This is an update to preliminary notification PNO-IV-09-004 issued August 5, 2009, for a fire and reactor scram along with a Notification of Unusual Event which had been declared at 8:12 a.m. (PDT) and terminated at 10:06 a.m., after the smoke and gases from the fire had dissipated.

The licensee determined that the cause of the fire had been a catastrophic failure of a connector on the non-segregated bus feeding the SH-5 bus and the SH-6 bus from the normal transformer #2. That failure was also the cause of the turbine trip and subsequent reactor scram which was as designed. The licensee also determined that the cause of the failure was a center bus bar overheated at a flex connection. Further investigation of the cause is in progress.

As corrective actions, the licensee replaced the damaged sections of the affected bus and upgraded the load-carrying flex connections on the affected bus. To establish the extent of condition, the licensee opened all five non-segregated bus ducts; visually inspected the bus, links, and insulators; cleaned and checked the torque of all insulators, and performed borescope inspections of all bus links. On all five non-segregated buses, the licensee has installed thermography access windows in the duct near all rigid and flex connections, and is establishing a plan for periodic thermographic inspection of those connections.

The licensee restarted the plant on August 31, 2009, and plans to synchronize the main generator to the electrical grid on September 1, 2009.

The resident inspectors plan to monitor plant startup and further recovery actions.

The information presented herein is based on information provided by the licensee, and is current as of 3:00 pm on August 31, 2009.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML092430558

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