



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC FINALIZES WHITE FINDING FOR THREE MILE ISLAND 1 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT OVER FLOODING PROTECTION ISSUE

The Three Mile Island 1 nuclear power plant will receive additional oversight from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission based on an inspection finding involving the protection of safety equipment from flooding. The finding, which has now been finalized, was identified by NRC inspectors during one of the agency's numerous post-Fukushima reviews of U.S. reactors.

Three Mile Island 1 is located in Middletown, Pa., and operated by Exelon Generation Co. LLC.

The NRC uses a color-coded system to classify inspection findings, which range from green, for a safety issue of very low significance, to red, for a safety issue of high significance. In this case, the NRC has determined the inspection finding should be categorized as white, or a safety issue of low to moderate safety significance. The finding will result in the plant moving from the Licensee Response Column of the agency's [Action Matrix](#) to the Regulatory Response Column. This will result in additional scrutiny until the agency is satisfied the relevant issues have been properly evaluated and satisfactory corrective actions have been developed and implemented. While the NRC's [annual assessment](#) of 2012 performance indicated the agency would carry out the normal level of inspection at the facility, today's letter adjusts the agency's regulatory oversight of the unit.

During a walkdown, or visual inspection, of Three Mile Island 1's protections against flooding last fall, NRC inspectors identified an external flood barrier deficiency. Specifically, the inspectors determined that the company had failed to identify and correct, during external flood barrier assessments, a problem involving electrical cable conduits – that is, pipes holding such cables. The conduits, located in the plant's air intake tunnel, were not adequately sealed to maintain the integrity of the flood barrier. In the event of severe flooding, the problem had the potential to pose a threat to plant safety equipment.

Subsequent to the identification of the issue, Exelon took action to seal the conduits and restore the integrity of the external flood barrier.

Exelon was given an opportunity to attend a regulatory enforcement conference to further discuss the NRC's finding or to respond to the finding in writing. The company declined to do so.

“The NRC has made clear that ensuring U.S. nuclear power plants are adequately protected against flooding issues remains a priority. This is especially important in light of the March 2011 events at the Fukushima Daiichi facility in Japan,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “Based on our inspectors’ finding of a deficiency in this area at Three Mile Island 1, we will perform additional reviews at the plant to make certain the company’s response is both thorough and comprehensive.”

The NRC will conduct a supplemental inspection at a future date to evaluate the company’s root cause analysis and corrective actions with respect to the problem.

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