

No: 13-057

July 2, 2013

CONTACT: David McIntyre, 301-415-8200

NRC Cites Duke Energy for Fire Protection Violation at Oconee Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Notice of Violation and a Confirmatory Order to Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC for failing to implement a license condition on fire protection at its Oconee nuclear power plant in South Carolina. Oconee has three pressurized water reactors and is located about 30 miles west of Greenville, S.C.

Duke had committed through a license condition to complete installation and implementation of the protected service water system at Oconee by Jan. 1, 2013, as part of transitioning the plant's fire protection program to the National Fire Protection Association Standard No. 805 under [NRC regulations](#). When Duke notified the NRC that it would miss the deadline and requested an extension, the NRC denied the request.

Failure to complete the installation of the protected service water system is a significant regulatory concern to the NRC because proper installation would improve safety and reduce risk at the plant. Duke has increased compensatory fire protection measures that further ensure adequate safety at the plant while completing the upgrades.

NRC staff held a pre-decisional enforcement conference with Duke officials in March. During that session and a subsequent meeting, Duke agreed to a schedule that will complete Oconee's transition to the NFPA 805 standard by 2016, with several intermediate milestones that will provide safety enhancements before that date. Those milestones are spelled out in the Confirmatory Order issued July 1, and are now regulatory requirements as part of the Oconee operating license.

The NRC staff determined that Duke's violation of its NFPA 805 license conditions was a Severity Level III violation, the second-lowest of four severity levels in the NRC enforcement process. Because Duke took corrective actions to commit additional resources and improve management of the project, implement compensatory measures and establish a new timeline for completing the transition to the NFPA 805 standard, no civil penalty will be assessed at this time. A civil penalty will be considered if Duke misses milestones established in the Confirmatory Order.