

No: II-14-002

January 21, 2014

CONTACT: Roger Hannah 404-997-4417
Joey Ledford 404-997-4416

NRC Begins Special Inspection at Farley Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has launched a special inspection at Southern Nuclear Operating Co.'s Farley nuclear power plant to assess the circumstances surrounding the failure of some electrical circuits on Unit 2 during testing earlier this month.

The two-unit Farley plant is located near Columbia, Ala., about 18 miles east of Dothan.

The circuits that failed the test would automatically start one group or train of equipment that would cool the reactor during certain accident scenarios. Farley plant employees found the circuits in a condition that would have prevented the equipment from functioning if needed, but other equipment providing similar functions would have been available. When the condition was discovered, operators shut down Unit 2 and began troubleshooting the issue.

The NRC determined that a two-member special inspection team was the appropriate response and those inspectors will begin their work today reviewing the failed test information, the company's actions, the plant's maintenance practices for the circuits and any history of related failures. The team is comprised of a senior resident inspector from another site with experience at the Farley plant and a region-based inspector with electrical expertise.

"Although there was no immediate safety issue, this failed test does raise some questions that need to be addressed," said Victor McCree, NRC Region II Administrator. "Our special inspection team will gather information to assess the failure and the company's actions."

The on-site portion of the inspection will take several days. A report documenting the results should be issued within 45 days of the completion of the inspection.