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NRC Finalizes Security-Related Inspection Finding for Millstone Nuclear Power Plant, Resulting in Additional Oversight

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will increase its level of oversight at the Millstone nuclear power plant following the finalization of a security-related inspection finding classified as “greater than green.” Dominion Nuclear Connecticut Inc. owns the plant, which has two operating reactors and is located in Waterford, Conn.

The NRC uses a color-coded assessment system for inspection findings and performance indicators, with colors ranging from green, for very low safety or security significance, to white, yellow or red, connoting high safety or security significance. In the case of security-related inspection findings or performance indicators, the NRC notifies the public when the “greater than green” threshold has been crossed. However, the agency does not provide specifics because of the sensitive nature of the information associated with such findings and indicators.

NRC inspectors identified the finding following a security baseline inspection at the Millstone plant concluded on Nov. 24, 2014. The finding was documented in an inspection report issued on Jan. 5. The NRC requested that Dominion take part in a regulatory conference with agency staff to provide additional information and perspectives regarding the finding. That closed conference was held at the NRC’s Region I Office on Feb. 17.

After considering the information presented by the company, and the information developed during the inspection, the NRC has determined the finding is appropriately characterized as “greater than green.”

“The NRC will have to determine the most appropriate response with respect to inspections and follow-up reviews, based on the significance of the finding,” NRC Region I Administrator Dan Dorman said. “It should be noted that the security of the plant is not in question and, indeed, our inspectors checked that compensatory measures were implemented before leaving the site.”

The Millstone Unit 3 plant was already under additional NRC oversight after receiving a finalized white (low to moderate significance) inspection finding last year. That finding stemmed from problems that affected the plant’s turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump from May 2013 through February 2014.