

June 24, 1994

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-IV-94-034

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 staff on this date.

Facility

Washington Public Power Supply System
Washington Nuclear 2
Richland, Washington
Dockets: 50-397

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: LOSS OF FOREIGN MATERIAL (ELECTRIC LIGHT) INTO REACTOR VESSEL

During the evening of Wednesday, June 22, 1994, the licensee placed the steam separator on top of the reactor core as part of the ongoing postrefueling reactor vessel reassembly. The service platform was then placed on the reactor vessel flange, and the licensee proceeded to lock the steam separator in position as called for by refueling procedures. Electric underwater lights were used at various positions around the reactor cavity to facilitate attachment of the steam separator. Preliminary information received by the resident inspectors indicates that each underwater light was supported only by its power cord, with no separate lanyard or other attachment.

At 5 a.m. on Thursday, June 23, when securing of the steam separator was complete and the licensee was proceeding to remove the underwater lights, two lights were found to have come unplugged and fallen onto a ledge in the reactor vessel. The licensee was successful in retrieving one light, but the other fell farther into the reactor vessel. During additional retrieval efforts, the light fell still farther into the reactor vessel annulus area, in the vicinity of the suction to reactor recirculation Pump A (to which the shutdown cooling suction line is connected). Operators stopped the operating residual heat removal (RHR) pump at approximately 12 noon on Thursday to facilitate retrieval efforts. When the RHR pump was restarted (in the shutdown cooling mode) at 1:41 p.m., an operator in the pump room reported that the pump vibrated more than usual and made a noise similar to a check valve slam. Another operator reported a few minutes later that he heard a noise in the RHR piping at a higher level in the reactor building. The RHR pump remained in operation, with no other abnormal conditions noted.

The licensee has suspended reactor vessel reassembly activities, and has convened an incident review board (IRB) to investigate this event and develop an action plan. Resolution of this event is expected to result in a day-for-day delay in the licensee's restart. The resident inspectors are following the licensee's ongoing actions.

The state of Washington WILL BE informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the Senior Resident Inspector at approximately 5 p.m. on June 23, 1994. Region IV has informed NRR and the EDO's office relative to recovery of

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the light and any potential damage to RHR components.

This information herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 9 a.m. on June 24, 1994.

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