

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-96-026

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 Region I staff in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania on this date.

Facility

Gpu Nuclear Corp.
Oyster Creek 1
Forked River, New Jersey
Dockets: 50-219

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: PLANT SHUTDOWN TO RETRIEVE CONDENSATE SYSTEM COMPONENT

On April 25, 1996, the licensee commenced a plant shutdown to perform maintenance. The primary reason for the shutdown is to retrieve a component that had previously broken loose and had become lodged adjacent to an internal condensate system piping flow element located downstream of its original location. The component is an approximately 16 inch diameter steel plate, 1/4 inch thick, which normally functions to divide condensate flow through a condensate system heat exchanger. Licensee workers initially discovered the plate to be missing in December 1995, during maintenance when the plant was shut down. Physical inspections, including a remote video inspection, of the piping system did not locate the plate at that time. At that time, the licensee evaluated continued operation of the unit in a configuration without the plate installed, as well as the possible effects on operation by the missing components.

During a planned weekend load reduction (to 70 percent power) on April 19, 1996, to perform testing and other maintenance, the licensee continued their efforts to locate the missing plate. Radiography of piping downstream of the heat exchanger identified that the plate was inside the condensate piping adjacent to a 15 inch diameter flow element (orifice). Although the 16 inch plate (with attached connection arms) could not continue downstream past the smaller approximately 15 inch opening, the licensee was concerned that additional flow manipulations could possibly cause the plate to block condensate flow, which could cause a plant transient. Therefore, they maintained power at 70 percent during the week of April 22, 1996, so that a controlled shutdown could be planned.

The shutdown progressed safely and without incident. As of 9:30 a.m. on April 26, 1996, the reactor is shut down and reactor coolant system temperature is 360 degrees F. After Cold Shutdown conditions (reactor coolant system less than 212 degrees F and vented) are reached, workers will enter the related condensate piping to retrieve the heat exchanger plate. The licensee will then conduct an evaluation to determine the cause for the failure which resulted in the plate breaking loose from the heat exchanger.

While the plant is shut down, the licensee will perform additional maintenance work, such as investigating and repairing a failed pump, also part of the secondary plant (the auxiliary flash tank large pump). The

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plant shutdown is expected to last four days.

The licensee has issued a News Release on April 26, 1996. The state of New Jersey has been informed of the contents of this Preliminary Notification.

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