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Church Rock mill may reopen Saturday

By The Associated Press

United Nuclear Corp. said if its Church Rock uranium mill passes a state inspection today, operations might resume Saturday.

Charles Ofelt, director of industrial relations and legal officer for United Nuclear, said Thursday the company was hopeful the facility would be ready today for an inspection.

If the mill passes inspection, Ofelt said, "we would hope to resume operations Saturday."

The mill has been shutdown since July 16 when a



uranium tailings pond dam breached, spilling almost 100 million gallons of contaminated liquid into the nearby Rio Puerco.

Meanwhile, a top state Environmental Improvement Division official, Cubia Clayton, said a request by the federal Environmental Protection Division to postpone the mill's reopening can't be granted.

Adlene Harrison of Dallas, regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, asked for the delay pending a discussion of the environmental risks involved in the resumption of mill operations.