

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

PNO-IV-98-045

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 IV staff in Arlington, Texas on this date.

Facility

Entergy Operations, Inc.
Waterford 3
Killona, Louisiana
Dockets: 50-382

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: PREPARATION FOR HURRICANE GEORGES

At 11:20 a.m. (CDT) on September 26, 1998, Waterford Nuclear Generating Station, Unit 3 (Waterford 3) declared an unusual event because of a hurricane warning in St. Charles Parish. Waterford 3 in preparation for the hurricane, initiated action in accordance with its hurricane response procedures, established a 115 person contingent at the plant in the event that the hurricane threatened the facility. Waterford 3 started both diesel generators to demonstrate operability and topped off the fuel tanks. River Bend Station continued to operate at full power since hurricane force winds were not predicted in the vicinity of the site. Both facilities secured equipment onsite that would be exposed to any high winds.

On September 25, Region IV dispatched regional inspectors to relieve the resident inspectors at River Bend Station and Waterford 3, and to provide assistance to Entergy Operations, Inc., as requested. At 4 p.m. on September 27, Region IV activated the incident response center in the monitoring phase of the normal mode because of the potential for Hurricane Georges to make land fall near New Orleans, LA and affect Waterford 3. At that time, Hurricane Georges was located 145 miles southeast of New Orleans, LA at that time. At approximately 5 p.m. on September 27, Region IV issued a press release to notify the media of NRC actions in response to the hurricane.

At 6 a.m. on September 28, Hurricane Georges was located approximately 118 miles east of New Orleans with the center near latitude 30.4 North and 88.9 West (near Biloxi, MS) when the north part of the eye of Hurricane Georges made land fall; the hurricane was moving NNW at approximately 7 mph. At last report, the winds at Waterford 3 were blowing at approximately 18 mph. The maximum winds measured at the site occurred at approximately 12 midnight and were measured at 28.5 mph. Waterford 3 continues in an unusual event because the hurricane warning remains in effect in the area. The unit was shutdown approximately 10 days ago because of equipment problems unrelated to the hurricane warning. The plant commenced a cooldown from Mode 3 (hot shutdown) at 1:30 p.m. on September 27, in response to a prediction from St. Charles Parish of possible hurricane force winds at the site within 12 hours. The plant cooldown was suspended after weather predictions were modified. The plant will remain in a shutdown condition (Mode 4 at 260 degrees F) until any threat from the hurricane has passed.

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NRC inspectors were onsite at both Waterford 3 and River Bend Station throughout the evening and will remain onsite until the threat of the hurricane has passed. The Region IV State Liaison Officer is at the Louisiana Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge. The state of Louisiana continues to monitor the advance of Hurricane Georges.

Region IV will continue to monitor the progress of Hurricane Georges until further notice.

The state of Louisiana has been informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee at 11:20 a.m. on September 26.

Region IV has informed EDO/NRR/PA.

This information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 8:30 a.m.

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