



NRC NEWS

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NRC Releases Preliminary Findings from Vogtle Unit 3 Special Inspection

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has released its initial [conclusions](#) from the June 21 special inspection at the Vogtle nuclear power plant units under construction in Waynesboro, Georgia. The NRC launched the inspection to understand the cause and extent of construction quality issues in the safety-related electrical raceway system at Unit 3.

Electrical cable raceway systems are designed and routed to prevent a single event from disabling redundant safety-related equipment in commercial nuclear power plants. These systems consist primarily of conduits and cable trays, which route and support the cables needed to ensure safety-related equipment performs its safety functions.

During the inspection, NRC inspectors reviewed the plant's operator, Southern Nuclear Operation Company's quality assurance process, corrective actions, and root cause analysis related to the electrical raceway system. They also interviewed electrical craftspeople, superintendents, work planners, field engineers and quality control employees, and reviewed dozens of condition reports, technical evaluations, and work packages.

The NRC inspectors found that Southern Nuclear did not adequately separate safety and non-safety-related cables for reactor coolant pumps and equipment designed to safely shut down the reactor. They also found instances where the company did not identify and report construction quality issues related to the safety-related electrical raceway system and enter them into its corrective action program.

If finalized at their current level, the findings will increase NRC oversight at the plant. The conditions in the electrical cable raceway system, if left uncorrected, would prevent the plant from operating within the NRC's regulations. However, there is no increased risk to the public while Southern Nuclear corrects the conditions because there is no nuclear fuel in the reactor.

After reviewing the NRC inspection report, Southern Nuclear can accept the NRC's findings or provide additional information in writing or during a regulatory conference that would be open to the public. The NRC will consider all available information before making a final determination and document the decision in publicly available correspondence.

The NRC will not authorize the licensee to load fuel and operate Vogtle Unit 3 until construction is complete and it has satisfied the [standards](#) identified in its [combined license](#).