



NRC NEWS

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NRC BEGINS SPECIAL INSPECTION AT OCONEE NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has dispatched a special inspection team to the Oconee nuclear power plant to evaluate an issue related to the plant's standby shutdown facility, which is intended for use when regular and emergency reactor cooling systems are not available.

The Oconee plant, operated by Duke Energy, is located near Seneca, S.C., about 30 miles west of Greenville.

On June 24, Oconee plant employees determined that testing on the standby shutdown facility pressurizer heater breakers was not successful and the breakers were declared operable but degraded.

The standby shutdown facility is designed to be used for reactor cooling during certain accident scenarios, including fires and severe storms where other cooling systems might be unavailable or inoperable.

The NRC's special inspection team will determine the facts surrounding the degraded condition of the Oconee standby shutdown facility and evaluate Duke Energy's response to that condition. The team will also assess Duke's revised operating procedures related to the facility as well as operators' training and capabilities to implement those procedures.

The special inspection began Tuesday and is expected to continue for about one week. The NRC will issue a report within 45 days of the completion of the inspection.

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