

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region II
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RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE

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NRC STAFF FORMS AUGMENTED INSPECTION TEAM (AIT)
TO REVIEW OCONEE STEAM LINE RUPTURE EVENT

Preliminary Findings Will Be Discussed In Public Meeting

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has formed a special Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) to review circumstances associated with the rupture of an 18-inch steam line at the Oconee nuclear power plant near Seneca, South Carolina on September 24 which sent seven workers to the hospital.

NRC officials said the AIT supersedes a team of inspectors sent to the site immediately after the event and will be led by and staffed by those same inspectors with the addition of specialists from the agency's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

On September 24, at 4:44 p.m., an 18-inch steam line ruptured in the non-nuclear area of the plant where maintenance personnel were working on valves in the basement of the Unit 2 turbine building. Seven workers were injured and transported to hospitals for treatment.

The injured workers had no radioactive contamination, and the event posed no threat to plant workers not in the immediate area or to residents near the site.

The team will hold an open exit meeting with company officials upon completion of its inspection to discuss preliminary findings. The team leader, Thomas A. Peebles, a Branch Chief in the NRC's Division of Reactor Safety in Atlanta, will meet with interested members of the public and news media representatives to answer their questions at the conclusion of the exit meeting.

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