



# NRC NEWS

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
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## NRC BEGINS SPECIAL INSPECTION AT FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is conducting a special inspection at the Farley nuclear power plant, operated by Southern Nuclear Operating Co., near Dothan, Al., to assess circumstances associated with valve failures during periodic testing on Unit 2 of the two-unit plant.

NRC officials said that a valve on one of two redundant systems in the reactor's residual heat removal (RHR) system failed to open during a routine surveillance test early this year. The RHR system is used to remove heat from the reactor after it has been shut down. The NRC said the same valve had also failed to operate properly during the second quarter of 2006.

The NRC said that, while no difficulties resulted from these conditions during operations, the problems indicated repetitive failures involving safety-related equipment and required a special inspection by the NRC staff.

The special inspection team will review historic data related to the component failures, including a timeline of previous valve operation and maintenance; review corrective actions and the company's root cause analysis; and evaluate the potential for failures on similar components.

The NRC said the condition posed no immediate threat to safe operation at Farley but the agency determined that a special inspection team was the appropriate level of NRC response. Agency officials will determine at a later date whether further NRC regulatory action is appropriate.

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