



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region II
245 Peachtree Center Ave. NE, Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30303-1257
Web Site: www.nrc.gov

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CONTACT: Roger Hannah (404) 997-4417
Joey Ledford (404) 997-4416

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E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC INCREASES OVERSIGHT OF HATCH NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has made a final determination on an inspection finding at the Hatch nuclear plant related to the replacement of an important component on one of the plant's emergency diesel generators.

The finding is "white," meaning the issue has low to moderate safety significance. That "white" finding, in combination with a previous violation also associated with emergency diesel generators, will result in additional NRC inspections and potentially other NRC actions.

The NRC's oversight program for nuclear plants uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess plant performance. The colors start with "green," which has very low safety significance, to "white," "yellow" or "red," based on the significance of the issues. Inspection findings and performance indicators are updated on the NRC's web site (www.nrc.gov) each quarter.

The two-unit Hatch plant, operated by Southern Nuclear Operating Co., is located in south Georgia near Baxley, about 20 miles south of Vidalia.

The NRC staff identified the apparent violation in a Feb. 12 inspection report. In lieu of requesting a regulatory conference, Southern Nuclear provided a written response and while it did not dispute the violation, the company contended it was of very low safety significance.

After considering the information from the written response, the NRC staff concluded that the violation is "white," and has low to moderate safety significance. The NRC determined that the licensee did not satisfy the requirements of the plant's technical specifications by failing to establish and perform preventive maintenance activities to replace electrolytic capacitors, a component in the emergency diesel generators electrical circuits.

A copy of the assessment letter can be accessed from the NRC web site www.nrc.gov/reading/rm/adams/web-based.html using the number ML101400241 or from the Region II Office of Public Affairs.

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