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ALL NUCLEAR FACILITIES IN EASTERN UNITED STATES TRANSITION SAFELY THROUGH Y2K ROLLOVER

All 60 nuclear power plants and one fuel facility in the Eastern United States have reported to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that they have transitioned safely through the Y2K rollover. There are a total of 103 operating nuclear power plants and two fuel facilities in the United States.

Plants from New Hampshire to Florida were operating normally as the focus of the NRC's attention prepared to shift to the mid-west where another 35 nuclear plants and an additional fuel cycle facility in the Central Time Zone prepare for midnight.

"The NRC will continue to monitor the operations of all of the commercial nuclear power plants and fuel cycle facilities in the U.S. for any Y2K-related problems," NRC Chairman Richard A. Meserve said from the agency's emergency operations center in Rockville, Md. "So far things look good and we are heartened to see that years of hard work by the NRC and the nuclear industry are paying off in a smooth transition through the new millennium."

The Chairman added that the real test of the nuclear industry's efforts will come within the next few days when other problems might arise.

Three nuclear power plants safely shut down in the past 36 hours in South Carolina, Georgia and Pennsylvania although the shutdowns are not believed to be Y2K-related. All of the plants are in stable condition.

The Limerick nuclear power plant, operated by PECO Energy Co., about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia, shut down about 1:10 a.m. December 31, due to a failure of the plant's main electrical transformer. The reactor shut down without any complications and is stable.

The Catawba nuclear power plant, operated by Duke Power. Co., near Rock Hill, S.C., automatically shut down about 6:20 p.m. Thursday, December 30, without any complications. The cause of the shutdown appears to have been an equipment failure.

The Vogtle nuclear reactor, operated by the Southern Nuclear Operating Co., about 25 miles southeast of Augusta, Ga., was manually shut down shortly before 5 p.m. Thursday, December 30, because of an equipment problem. The problem was corrected and the plant is restarting.

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