



NRC NEWS

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NRC CITES NNECO FOR VIOLATION AT MILLSTONE 2

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited Northeast Nuclear Energy Company (NNECO) for a violation of NRC requirements at its Millstone Unit 2 nuclear power plant in Waterford Conn. The NRC has determined the violation is of low to moderate safety significance.

The finding at Millstone involved a turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump, one of three pumps that supplies water to the steam generators if the normal feedwater pumps are lost. The turbine-driven pump is designed to operate for events involving a loss of electrical power. NRC inspectors determined NNECO failed to take prompt and comprehensive corrective actions in August, after the pump exhibited erratic operation during a surveillance test. During the next test on September 20, operators determined that the pump was unable to perform its function. Further, it was determined that the pump failure in September was related to the problem identified in August, which was not corrected at that time. This failure has been characterized as "white" (of low to moderate safety significance) because of the pump's importance in mitigating plant events.

A regulatory conference was held on November 28 to provide NNECO officials an opportunity to present information to the NRC to enable the agency to reach a final determination of the significance of the inspection findings.

Under the NRC's new reactor oversight process, inspection findings are evaluated under a significance determination process and assigned a color that indicates safety significance. Findings with very low safety significance are labeled "green." "White" findings have low to moderate importance to safety and may require additional NRC inspection. Progressively more serious findings are labeled "yellow" and "red," and receive commensurately greater oversight. A more detailed explanation of the NRC's new reactor oversight process can be found on the NRC's website at: www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ROP/description.html.

NNECO has 30 days to respond to the notice of violation and 10 days to appeal the NRC's significance determination.

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