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NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM BEGINS WORK AT INDIAN POINT

A team of inspectors from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Region I office has begun a special inspection at the Indian Point nuclear power plant to look into a series of unplanned shutdowns at the facility. The two-unit site, operated by Entergy Nuclear Northeast, is located in Buchanan, N.Y.

Early on August 3, Indian Point 2 shut down due to an electrical fault in the off-site power grid during an electrical storm. Over the past two years, there have been a number of unplanned reactor shutdowns that have occurred at both Indian Point 2 and 3. In all cases, the units have been operated safely, and there has been no impact on public health and safety or the environment.

In accordance with the agency's reactor oversight program, this special inspection, while independently reviewing the August 3 event at Unit 2, will be closely coordinated with a previously planned supplemental inspection at Unit 3. The supplemental inspection was planned because a performance indicator for unplanned reactor shutdowns had crossed a threshold, requiring additional inspection effort. This inspection will review the circumstances and causal factors associated with the recent unplanned shutdown as well as other similar events at the site. The team will independently evaluate equipment and human performance and assess Entergy's root cause evaluation and corrective actions.

The inspection will be conducted in phases over the next several weeks. The team will document its findings in an inspection report that will be issued within 45 days of the close of the inspection.

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