



NRC NEWS

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Web Site: www.nrc.gov

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CONTACT: Roger Hannah (404) 562-4417
Joey Ledford (404) 562-4416

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E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

NRC SENDS SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO WESTINGHOUSE NUCLEAR FUEL PLANT NEAR COLUMBIA

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has dispatched a Special Inspection Team to the Westinghouse commercial nuclear fuel plant near Columbia, S.C., to review the circumstances associated with a Jan. 24 event involving a spill of about 200 gallons of wastewater containing ammonia and low levels of uranium.

The spill was the result of a pump failure and operators shut down the process after a few minutes. Plant employees cleaned the area, no workers were exposed to significant concentrations and no medical attention was needed. Westinghouse reported the event to the NRC on Jan. 25 and the NRC staff decided that a special inspection to review the facts surrounding the event, assess the Westinghouse response and evaluate the company's corrective actions was the appropriate course of action.

The NRC special inspection team, which is expected to begin its work at Westinghouse today, will determine the safety implications and adequacy of the corrective actions for the equipment design and chemical safety issues which led to the event. The NRC inspectors will issue a publicly available report within 30 days of the inspection's completion.

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