



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC ISSUES WATERFORD NUCLEAR PLANT INSPECTION FINDING OF LOW TO MODERATE SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has determined that an inspection finding at the Waterford 3 nuclear plant involving unplanned radiation exposure to workers is of “white” or low to moderate safety significance. The facility, operated by Entergy, is located 25 miles west of New Orleans, La.

“This finding was caused by the licensee’s failure to use effective engineering controls prior to conducting work during a refueling outage,” Region IV Administrator Elmo Collins said. “The NRC will determine the appropriate follow-up actions to ensure this issue is being addressed; including additional inspections.”

In 2009, during a refueling outage, officials failed to properly contain highly radioactive cooling water from leaking onto work areas resulting in unplanned radiation doses to workers. Although, the radiological doses the workers received were below regulatory limits, NRC regulations require that radiation exposures be limited to As Low As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA).

This issue was identified during an NRC inspection in the spring of 2010, to review the effectiveness of radiological control practices during the previous refueling outage. NRC staff held a regulatory conference with Entergy officials on October 3, during which licensee representatives discussed the inspection finding.

After review of the information, NRC staff has characterized the finding as “white”. NRC evaluates performance at plants with a color-coded process which classifies regulatory findings as either green, white, yellow, or red, in order of increasing significance.

The NRC inspection report is available through the agency’s electronic reading room at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> and ML112360693. Help in accessing these documents is available from the NRC Public Document Room staff by calling 1-800-397-4209.

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