



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406
E-mail: opal@nrc.gov
Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. I-08-058

Oct. 27, 2008

Contact: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330

Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

NRC MONITORING ALERT AT SUSQUEHANNA 2 NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is monitoring an Alert declared this afternoon at the Susquehanna 2 nuclear power plant in Salem Township (Luzerne County), Pa. An Alert is the second-lowest of four levels of emergency classification used by the NRC.

At 4:15 a.m. today, maintenance work was initiated on a water line that is part of a reactor safety system for the plant. That work involved the use of a “freeze seal” – that is, placing a device containing nitrogen over a section of piping so that the water inside the line can be frozen. Once frozen, the line can be isolated to allow maintenance to be performed on it.

PPL, the plant’s owner and operator, declared an Alert at 12:06 p.m. when higher-than-acceptable levels of nitrogen, a toxic gas, were detected inside the room. As required by procedures, the one plant worker who was in the room at the time evacuated.

The NRC began formally monitoring the event at 1:02 p.m. The two NRC Resident Inspectors at Susquehanna are closely following developments at the site.

No injuries have been reported and there are no off-site impacts as a result of the event. The plant planned to send personnel into the room to investigate the source of the leakage after ensuring nitrogen levels were safe. However, preliminary information did not detect any active leakage of nitrogen.

Susquehanna 2 remains at 100-percent power.

Susquehanna 1, an adjoining boiling-water reactor, was not affected by the event and continues to operate at 94-percent power.

Federal and state officials have been notified regarding the event.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.