



NRC NEWS

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NRC RECEIVES RESPONSE TO CONFIRMATORY ACTION LETTER, ACTION PLAN FOR SAN ONOFRE UNIT 2 PROPOSED; NRC REVIEW TO TAKE MONTHS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has received a letter from Southern California Edison indicating they have addressed issues in an NRC Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL). The NRC also received a proposed action plan that includes operating Unit 2 at the San Onofre plant at reduced power for an initial five-month period followed by more inspection; however, months of NRC inspection and analysis will precede any decision on whether to restart the reactor.

“Our primary focus now must be on analyzing SCE’s response to the CAL before addressing the restart question. The agency will not permit a restart unless and until we can conclude the reactor can be operated safely,” NRC Chairman Allison Macfarlane said. “This could take a number of months. Our inspections and review will be painstaking, thorough and will not be rushed.”

The agency will convene public meetings near the plant as the process progresses. One will be scheduled soon to discuss the licensee’s letter to the NRC responding to the CAL the agency sent the company.

A leak in a Unit 3 steam generator tube Jan. 31 led to the shutdown of that unit. The other reactor, Unit 2, was off-line at the time. Subsequent inspections of the nearly new generators in both units found unexpected wear. The two-reactor plant is located just south of San Clemente, Calif.

SCE is seeking NRC permission to operate Unit 2 at 70 percent power for approximately five months after which it would shut down for an inspection to examine the steam generators again. NRC expects to spend several months reviewing documents submitted by the licensee and performing a thorough and independent assessment prior to making any decisions about restart.

NRC staff will evaluate the licensee’s analysis of the excessive tube wear and the ability of the Unit 2 steam generator tubes to maintain integrity during the proposed five-month cycle. Unit 3 remains shutdown for further evaluation.

The CAL and SCE'S response letter will be publicly available in ADAMS and on NRC's Web page at [this link](#).

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