



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC CONTINUES TO MONITOR HURRICANE SANDY; ALERT DECLARED AT OYSTER CREEK PLANT; NO PLANTS SHUT DOWN DUE TO THE STORM

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is continuing to monitor impacts from Hurricane Sandy on nuclear power plants in the Northeastern United States, including an Alert declared at the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant in New Jersey. The plant, currently in a regularly scheduled outage, declared the Alert at approximately 8:45 p.m. EDT due to water exceeding certain high water level criteria in the plant's water intake structure.

An Alert is the second lowest of four NRC action levels. The Alert was preceded by an Unusual Event, declared at approximately 7 p.m. EDT when the water level first reached a minimum high water level criteria. Water level is rising in the intake structure due to a combination of a rising tide, wind direction and storm surge. It is anticipated water levels will begin to abate within the next several hours.

As of 9 p.m. EDT Monday, no plants had to shut down as a result of the storm although several plants were already out of service for regularly scheduled refueling and maintenance outages. All plants remain in a safe condition, with emergency equipment available if needed and NRC inspectors on-site.

The NRC has inspectors providing around the clock coverage at all of the plants that could experience effects of the storm. These include: Oyster Creek, in Lacey Township, N.J.; Salem and Hope Creek, in Hancocks Bridge, N.J.; Calvert Cliffs, in Lusby, Md.; Limerick, in Limerick Township, Pa.; Peach Bottom, in Delta, Pa.; Three Mile Island, in Middletown, Pa.; Susquehanna, in Salem Township, Pa.; Indian Point, in Buchanan, N.Y.; and Millstone, in Waterford, Conn. Those inspectors will independently verify that operators are following relevant procedures to ensure plant safety before, during and after the storm.

In addition, the NRC is monitoring the storm from its emergency response centers.

Nuclear power plant procedures require that the facilities shut down under certain severe weather conditions. The plants' emergency diesel generators are available if off-site power is lost during the storm. Also, all plants have flood protection above the predicted storm surge, and key components and systems are housed in watertight buildings capable of withstanding hurricane-force winds and flooding.

The NRC will continue to track Hurricane Sandy using the resources of all federal agencies and several weather forecasting services. The agency will also continue to communicate on storm-related developments with other federal and state agencies.

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