Duke addressing

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B.J. Gatten
Oconee Nuclear spokeswoman

BY NORMAN CANNADA
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SENECA — Officials at the Oconee Nuclear Station have already begun putting measures in place designed to respond to two "apparent violations" found in a recent fire protection inspection by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

The NRC officially notified Duke of the apparent violations in a letter dated Sept. 23 from Michael King, chief of the engineering branch of the NRC's Division of Reactor Safety, to Scott Batson, site vice president for the Oconee plant. The letter came as a result of a fire protection inspection in August. The commission performs the inspection every three years at Oconee.

In the letter, King cited two examples "where the Oconee fire probabilistic risk assessment" failed to address all potential risk contributors associated with fire scenarios. The other finding was Oconee failed to comply with a license condition that requires pri approval by the NRC before making a change to control of transient fire loads. The letter stated the findings "did not present immediate safety concerns" at the Oconee Nuclear Station.

The letter, and a 40-page report included with it, documents NRC inspection find-

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concerns



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Recent findings by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of "apparent violations" in a fire safety inspection do not mean there are immediate safety concerns at the plant, according to officials.

DUKE: Officials have already taken action to address concerns

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ings that are potentially "greater than green," which means they could have greater than very low safety significance, according to Joey Ledford, an NRC spokesman. The severity of the apparent violations has not yet been determined. There were also other findings that Ledford said were of "very low safety significance."

The letter stated that the Oconee station has already responded with "additional roving fire watches," where actual people are assigned to look for fire issues, in the areas listed in the NRC findings.

"We've already taken action to immediately address the concerns or to put interim compensatory measures in place," Oconee spokeswoman B.J. Gatten said Thursday. "We're going to take advantage of the information provided by the NRC to improve our programs and our processes."

Both Gatten and Ledford said neither the inspection nor its results are related to a finding earlier this year turning an apparent violation into a violation for the Oconee station's failure to meet a Dec. 31, 2012, deadline to implement a fire safety plan as the plant transitions to new National Fire Protection Association 805 standards that have changed some of the policies and practices related to fire protection.

The NRC has set up a series of six deadlines the Oconee plant will be required to meet at different intervals. All work must be completed by November 2016. Duke has completed 80 percent of the requirements for the fire plan. The biggest part of the plan remaining is full implementation of the Protected Service Water system.

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