Palisades Nuke Power Plant Shuts After Water Leak

COVERT TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) — Operators of the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant in southwestern Michigan removed it from service Sunday morning because of a water leak from a tank, which last year caused seepage into the control room.

Operators said they took the plant offline for repairs to the safety injection/refueling water tank.

"There is no impact on the health and safety of plant employees or the public," Palisades spokeswoman Lindsay Rose said.

The plant is along Lake Michigan in Van Buren County's Covert Township, about 80 miles east-northeast of Chicago.

"This tank has leaked before. It leaked in 2012. The plant had to shut down to repair the leak to the tank," federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission spokeswoman Viktoria Mitlyng said. "It's a repeat occurrence."

The leakage in 2012 caused water seepage into the plant's control room. Sunday's shutdown happened after the water tank exceeded a 38-gallon daily leak limit set after last year's shutdown.

"The NRC resident inspectors are closely following the plant's actions to identify the source of the leakage and repair the tank," Mitlyng said.

She also said inspectors "are evaluating these actions to make sure that the plant and the public continue to be safe."

The plant is owned by New Orleans-based Entergy Corp. and has been under extra NRC scrutiny after numerous safety issues. It has been shut down nine times since September 2011, including in February for a different water leakage problem.

In September 2012, the NRC conducted an 11-day inspection of the plant and determined that its operators had "adequately addressed" problems identified in 2011. But it said additional oversight was needed to ensure that remaining corrective actions were properly carried out and that the cause of leaks earlier that year would be understood so they wouldn't lead to new problems.

The NRC said the plant would undergo 1,000 hours of inspection beyond the 2,000 hours of so-called baseline inspections at nuclear plants annually.

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Online:

Plant details: http://bit.ly/13i0ToD [1]

NRC: http://www.nrc.gov [2]

Entergy: http://www.entergy.com [3]

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