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Contact: [Roger Hannah](#), 404-997-4417

NRC Launches Special Inspection at Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission began a special inspection today at FPL's Turkey Point nuclear power plant to review three Unit 3 trips, or unplanned shutdowns, that occurred between Aug. 17 and Aug. 20.

The two-unit plant is located near Homestead, Fla., approximately 30 miles south of Miami.

On Aug. 17, operators manually tripped the reactor from more than 90 percent power in response to rising steam generator water levels; on Aug. 19, the plant's reactor protection system automatically tripped the reactor during startup when an instrument sensed higher than expected neutron activity in the reactor core; and on Aug. 20, operators manually tripped the reactor from about 35 percent power in response to the loss of the single operating steam generator feedwater pump.

The five-person NRC inspection team will be led by the NRC's senior resident inspector at the Harris nuclear plant in North Carolina. It also includes a senior reactor analyst and staff with resident inspector and operations experience.

The inspectors will review the circumstances of each trip, assess the company's response, operator performance, corrective actions, and evaluate the application of industry operating experience.

The on-site portion of the inspection is expected to last about one week, and a report documenting the results is expected to be issued within 45 days of the completion of the inspection.