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**Subject:** Good bit of Media coverage

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Transformer at Oconee Nuclear Station catches fire

SENECA, SC (FOX Carolina) -

Oconee County Emergency Management said a transformer caught fire at the Oconee Nuclear Station.

Fire Chief Charlie King said the transformer was away from a reactive building. Firefighters responded to the fire **at 3:19 p.m.** and said when they arrived on scene, the transformer outside the building was well involved in fire.

The fire was declared an unusual event, the lowest of four nuclear emergency classifications. An alert was also declared, the second level of emergency classification, due to a downed power line associated with the oil-filled transformer.

**PHOTOS:** [Fire at Oconee Nuclear Station](#)

Forty firefighters from Oconee and Pickens County as well as the onsite fire brigade worked to control the fire in just over half an hour.

Below is the statement released by OCEM after the fire:

**At 3:19 pm**, personnel at Oconee Nuclear Station requested assistance for a fire on site. Keowee Fire arrived on scene within 10 minutes to find a large transformer outside of the building well involved in fire. Approximately 40 firefighters from both the onsite fire brigade and Oconee & Pickens County were able to bring the fire under control in just over 30 minutes. The transformer is located outside of the building. There was no damage to the building or the containment area. Unit #1 was shut down as a precaution. There is **NO POTENTIAL FOR RELEASE**. No Evacuations or traffic detours are needed. However, we ask that the public stay away from the area as emergency personnel and Duke Energy staff work around the area. There were no injuries sustained during the fire.

Crews are continuing to work with on site personnel to ensure the transformer remains cool and that there is no further extension. The run off from the firefighting water mixed with foam and transformer oil is being contained on site. Crews will remain on site throughout the evening assisting plant crews as needed.

The Oconee Nuclear Plant is located on Lake Keowee and began operation in 1973. It is owned by Duke Energy.

Duke Energy released the following statement regarding the fire:

The event at Oconee Nuclear Station was upgraded to an Alert classification **at 4:58 p.m.** when the fire that occurred earlier today damaged a power line in the station's switchyard, which resulted in an equipment fault. Per procedure, an Alert must be declared when a fire causes loss of electrical

equipment.

An Alert is the second in increasing significance of four nuclear emergency classifications. This classification is used to describe conditions that require emergency response agencies to be in a heightened state of readiness, but pose no threat to public safety.

An unusual event was declared at Oconee Nuclear Station today at due to a transformer fire in the Unit 1 switchyard **at 3:20 p.m.**

Unit 1 has been safely shutdown and Units 2 and 3 continue to operate safely.

Site fire brigade responded with assistance provided by local fire responders.

The fire has been extinguished

There was no impact to plant neighbors or employees.

We will be conducting a thorough investigation of the cause.

An Unusual Event is the lowest of four nuclear emergency classifications. This classification describes a condition or event that is outside of normal plant operations, but poses no threat to public safety.

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Read more: <http://www.foxcarolina.com/story/31398906/transformer-at-oconee-nuclear-station-catches-fire#ixzz42AcehfA0>

Transformer catches fire at Oconee Nuclear Station

By **Robert Cox**

Published: March 6, 2016, 4:14 pm Updated: March 6, 2016, 5:21 pm

From: Oconee County Emergency Services

A large transformer caught fire at the Oconee Nuclear Station around **3:20pm, Sunday afternoon.**

There was no damage to the building during the fire. The fire was brought under control after a half hour.

One of the reactors was shut down as a precaution but they say there is no danger to the public.

There were no injuries in the fire.

Firefighters will remain at the scene throughout the evening to assist crews from the power station.

Oconee Nuclear Station is located on the shores of Lake Keowee, 8 miles south of Seneca and is owned by Duke Energy.

<http://wspa.com/2016/03/06/transformer-catches-fire-at-oconee-nuclear-station/>

Fire At Oconee Nuclear Station

OCONEE COUNTY, S.C. —Oconee County Emergency Management Officials have confirmed to WYFF News 4 that there was a fire at the Oconee Nuclear Station. The Station has declared an "unusual event." OCEM officials say there is no public threat at this time.

The Oconee Nuclear Station is owned by Duke Energy and has been online since 1973.

We will continue to update this page as details become available.

UPDATE: OCEM director Scott Krein tells WYFF News 4 crews on the scene that the fire is out and has been contained. Krein says a transformer caught fire and burned for approximately half an hour before multiple local fire crews arrived on scene. The plant facilities were not evacuated and no nuclear material is in danger of being released. Oconee County Fire officials say that Unit 1 at the plant was shut down as a precaution. Fire and emergency management units remain on scene investigating the exact cause.

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/fire-at-oconee-nuclear-station/38371590>

Fire reported at Oconee Nuclear Station

THE GREENVILLE NEWS—A transformer burned for about 30 minutes **Sunday afternoon** at Oconee Nuclear Station, Oconee County Emergency Management said.

No evacuations were necessary and there was no threat to the public, officials said. The cause of the fire has not been determined, said Scott Batson, Oconee Nuclear site vice president.

The transformer fire itself was classified as an "unusual event," the least serious type of accident at a nuclear facility.

Fire from the burning transformer damaged a power line that runs from the transformer to a switch yard, from which power is sent to the grid, according to Batson. That forced officials to send out an alert, the second least serious level of emergency at a nuclear power plant, he said.

The alert was necessary because the problem could have affected operations of the plant itself. However, there was no damage to the Unit 1 reactor, he said.

Unit 1 was shut down as a precaution, because without the transformer, remaining transformers would not have been able to carry the load of electrical output, Batson said.

He said he didn't know when the unit would be put back into operation, and wouldn't speculate on what may have caused the transformer fire, other than a mechanical malfunction.

Duke Energy personnel running the reactor and responding to the fire did a good job of handling the situation in accordance with procedures, he said. There was no danger of release of radioactivity from the fire, he said.

The transformer is 25 to 30 feet from the turbine building that serves Unit 1 and about 100 yards from the reactor building itself, he said. Unit 1 is one of three reactors at the plant. The other two were unaffected by the incident, Batson said.

Richie Candill, chief of the Keowee Fire Department, said about 40 firefighters from four different local fire departments battled the blaze for about a half an hour after getting the call **at 3:19 p. m.** They used a foam and water mixture to suppress the fire since oil within the transformer was

burning, he said.

No one was hurt, he said.

An inspector from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission was on the scene soon after the fire, according to Batson.

Staff writer Romando Dixson contributed.

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/03/06/fire-reported-oconee-nuclear-station/81409432/>

Transformer fire leads to reactor shutdown at Oconee Nuclear Station

By **Kirk Brown** of the Independent Mail

SENECA - Dozens of firefighters battled a transformer fire **Sunday afternoon** at the Oconee Nuclear Station that prompted one of its three reactors to be shut down.

The fire was originally classified as an "unusual event" but was upgraded to an "alert" **at 4:58 p.m.**, according to a spokeswoman for Duke Energy, which operates the Oconee Nuclear Station. There have been only three alerts declared at the station in the past, with the last one happening in 1991.

According to an email from Duke Energy spokeswoman Mary Kathryn Green, the fire "damaged a power line in the station's switchyard, which resulted in an equipment fault. Per procedure, an Alert must be declared when a fire causes loss of electrical equipment."

"An Alert is the second in increasing significance of four nuclear emergency classifications," Green said. "This classification is used to describe conditions that require emergency response agencies to be in a heightened state of readiness, but pose no threat to public safety."

Personnel at the nuclear station requested assistance for a fire **at 3:19 p.m. Sunday**, according to a email statement from Oconee County Fire Chief Charlie King.

According to King, firefighters from Oconee County's Keowee station "arrived on scene within 10 minutes to find a large transformer outside of the building well involved in fire." A video accompanying King's email showed thick black smoke billowing into the sky.

King said approximately 40 firefighters from the station and Oconee and Pickens

counties were able to bring the fire under control in about 30 minutes.

"There was no damage to the building or the containment area," King said. "Unit #1 was shut down as a precaution."

King stressed that there was no potential for radiation to be released and that no evacuations or traffic detours were needed.

The 42-year-old Oconee Nuclear Station, which is 8 miles north of Seneca, has three nuclear reactors. Green said that Unit 1 was safely shut down and Units 2 and 3 at the plant continue to operate safely.

Duke Energy will be conducting a "thorough investigation of the cause" of Sunday's fire, Green said.

Routine inspections conducted at the station in December found cable problems associated with startup transformers, which provide electrical power to safety equipment, according to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

As a result of the cable problems, federal regulators conducted a special inspection at the station in January. The results of that inspection were not known Sunday.

Roger Hannah, a spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Atlanta, said his agency's resident inspector for the Oconee Nuclear Station went to the facility **after Sunday's** fire was reported.

Hannah said federal officials will evaluate whether further action is required.

According to Duke Energy's website, the Oconee Nuclear Station is the biggest of the company's six nuclear facilities and also one of the nation's largest. The Oconee station has a generating capacity of 2.6 million kilowatts, which is enough electricity to power to 1.9 million homes.

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/transformer-fire-extinguished-at-oconee-nuclear-station-2d691779-f1d8-2e0f-e053-0100007fc48f-371210741.html>

Fire Reported at Oconee Nuclear Station, Power Plant in South Carolina

By **Jack Phillips**, **Epoch Times** | March 6, 2016

Crews responded to a transformer fire at Oconee Nuclear Station, located in South Carolina, **on Sunday evening**, according to reports.

The Oconee County Emergency Management said the fire was extinguished and the plant wasn't

evacuated.

No nuclear material was released at the facility, operated by Duke Energy, reported [FOX CAROLINA](#).

Follow incident at Oconee Nuclear Station in SC [@CFPALERTS #OCONEEFIRE PIC.TWITTER.COM/I9H0T7ZHPZ](#)

— [FireNews.net \(@FireNews\)](#) MARCH 6, 2016

Video footage captured the fire as it happened.

Fire Chief Charlie King told the FOX affiliate that the transformer was away from a reactive building.

Officials released a statement, saying "Approximately 40 firefighters from both the onsite fire brigade and Oconee & Pickens County were able to bring the fire under control in just over 30 minutes.

"There is NO POTENTIAL FOR RELEASE. No Evacuations or traffic detours are needed. However, we ask that the public stay away from the area as emergency personnel and Duke Energy staff work around the area. There were no injuries sustained during the fire," they added.

One of the reactors was shut down as a precaution, officials told [WSPA-TV](#). There were no injuries. Firefighters will be stationed at the plant to assist crews from the power station.

The plant is located on the shores Lake Keowee near Seneca.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/1984784-fire-reported-at-oconee-nuclear-station-power-plant-in-south-carolina/>

Transformer fire shuts unit of South Carolina nuclear power station

REUTERS—A transformer at a nuclear power plant in South Carolina caught fire on Sunday, burning for about 30 minutes, but no nuclear material was in danger of being released, a local television station reported.

Citing Oconee County fire officials, Greenville, South Carolina-based WYFF-TV reported that Unit 1 at the Oconee Nuclear Station was shut down as a precaution. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

The fire did not lead to any evacuations, the station reported, citing Scott Krein, director of the Oconee County Emergency Management agency. Krein added there was no threat to the public from the fire.

The plant is owned by Duke Energy, which will report the fire as an "unusual event," the lowest classification of emergency at a nuclear station, the station reported.

(Reporting by Sharon Bernstein in Sacramento, Calif; Editing by Peter Cooney)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-north-carolina-nuclearpower-fire-idUSKCN0W812F>

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