

Earthquake Registering “Lower 6” Hits Miyagi Prefecture

At 11:46 a.m. on August 16, a strong earthquake struck a broad area of eastern Japan, registering a seismic intensity of 6- (“lower 6”) on the Japanese scale in Miyagi Prefecture. According to the Meteorological Agency, the epicenter was offshore of the prefecture. The estimated magnitude was 7.2 on the Richter scale. As a result of the earthquake, all units at the Onagawa NPS (Units 1-3) in Miyagi were shut down automatically.

The Onagawa NPS consists of three BWRs, one with output of 524MW and the other two 825MW. All were operating normally when the earthquake struck, and stopped automatically, as they are designed to do, to ensure safety. There were no radiological effects on the environment.

At Onagawa-3, glass windows in the visitors' gallery of the reactor building cracked, and about 45 liters of dilute sulfuric acid leaked from a tank in the Environmental Radioactivity Measurement Center on the premises. All the leaked acid has been recovered.



Onagawa NPS

The earthquake did not affect operations at other reactors in the region: Higashidori-1 NPS (in trial operation) of the Tohoku Electric Power Co. in Aomori Prefecture, Fukushima I or Fukushima II NPS of the Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) in Fukushima Prefecture, Tokai II NPS of the Japan Atomic Power Co. in Ibaraki Prefecture, and TEPCO's Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS in Niigata Prefecture. Neither were any abnormalities found in any of the key power transmission grids.

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