

Nuclear Reactor Shut Down in Russia

Short circuit causes automatic safety system to shut down nuclear reactor in Russia

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An automatic safety system shut down a reactor at a nuclear power plant near St. Petersburg Saturday after a short circuit, the state-run company overseeing Russia's nuclear power plants said.

Rosenergoatom said there was no radiation leak from the unplanned shutdown at the Leningrad nuclear power plant's No. 2 unit _ the second shutdown to hit the plant in a week.

The company did not say what caused the short circuit. Severe weather in the St. Petersburg area has caused some flooding in the city, and there have been reported power outages throughout the region.

The emergency system stopped two turbine generators due to sludge coming into the condenser's pipes, before shutting down the reactor altogether, the company said.

Radiation levels around the plant were normal, it said.

Last Friday, the automatic safety system shut down the same reactor for unknown reasons.

The Leningrad plant on the Gulf of Finland has four 1,000-megawatt graphite RBMK reactors _ the same as the Chernobyl nuclear plant, whose explosion 20 years ago sent radioactive fallout across northern Europe in the world's worst civilian nuclear accident.

Russia has 10 nuclear power plants with a total of 31 nuclear reactors.