

# Malfunction at Peach Bottom nuclear plant quickly resolved, posing no safety concerns, regulator says

[JEFF HAWKES | Staff Writer](#) Oct 21, 2019

A malfunction at the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant Monday was quickly resolved and posed “no immediate safety concerns,” regulatory officials said.

“There were no abnormal releases of radiation,” Neil Sheehan, a spokesman with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, told LNP.

The Exelon Generation-owned plant in southern York County declared an “unusual event” at 12:50 a.m. when an automatic process failed to insert control rods into a reactor core after an appropriate switch was turned.

The unusual event, which is the lowest level of emergency classification, was terminated at 2:30 a.m. after a reactor operator inserted the control rods with manual controls and successfully shut down the reactor.

The Unit 3 reactor, one of two at the plant, was at 5% power and was being shut down for refueling and maintenance when the malfunction occurred, Sheehan said.

“There were no immediate safety concerns in light of the successful shutdown,” Sheehan said.

An Exelon spokesperson said the problem was caused by a degraded piece of equipment, and it will be replaced during the outage.

A government inspector, who works full-time at the plant, was in the control room to observe the shutdown, and inspectors will follow up “to ensure that

the company's troubleshooting and any repairs are thorough and comprehensive," Sheehan said.

The plant's other reactor, Unit 2, was not affected and is operating at 100% power.

During the maintenance outage, technicians will replace nearly one-third of Unit 3's reactor fuel and perform 7,400 inspections, tests and maintenance activities that cannot be accomplished when it is generating electricity, Exelon said.

Exelon will employ more than 1,400 supplemental electricians, pipe fitters, welders, carpenters and laborers and other trades people to perform the maintenance work.

Peach Bottom's reactors began commercial operations in 1974 and power more than 2.7 million homes and businesses.