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Etats-Unis : Columbia : Trois travailleurs de Westinghouse brûlés à Columbia par une fuite de vapeur

Les travailleurs ont été transférés dans le centre des grands brûlés à Augusta. Il n'y a pas d'indication sur le nombre de travailleurs présents dans le local au moment de l'accident. Cette unité est située dans la zone d'assemblage final des barres de combustible. La vapeur ayant fuit d'un circuit de lavage de combustible, il n'y a aucun doute sur sa contamination radioactive... contamination qui n'est pourtant pas évoquée par les "responsables" qui affirment même qu'il n'y aurait aucun danger pour la santé ou l'environnement. L'usine n'a pas été fermée, seulement la partie touchée par l'accident.

Available in english only.

EXCLUSIVE : 3 Westinghouse workers burned in Columbia plant incident Friday HighlightsPublic, environment not at risk in third shift steam leak, plant spokeswoman says

No nuclear material involved, federal regulatory agency says

Workers transferred to Augusta burn center

i By CLIF LEBLANC

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"At no time was the public or the environment at risk," spokeswoman Jessica Barfield said of the 4:30 a.m. incident at the plant off Bluff Road south of the Capital City. She said there was no explosion and

that steam escaped because of a “mechanical issue.”

Westinghouse notified federal and state regulatory agencies as well as workplace accident investigators, Barfield said.

The third-shift workers, whom she did not identify, got onsite medical assistance then were taken to a Columbia-area hospital. Afterward, they were transported to the Augusta burn center, which specializes in treating severe burns.

Barfield said she did not know the extent of the burns. Asked if the injuries are life threatening, she said, “I can’t speak to that.”

The company responded to inquiries by the newspaper. It did not issue a public statement.

“Right now, the plant is not closed – just that particular area,” Barfield said.

Relatives of the workers have been notified and offered “all possible assistance from the company,” the spokeswoman said. Other workers also have access to help through company programs, she said.

Wash tanks are located in the final assembly area in preparation for shipment of fuel rod assemblies that are composed of nuclear pellets made and assembled at the plant, she said. Fuel rod assemblies are shipped to operating nuclear plants to power their reactors.

Barfield said she did not know how many workers were in the wash tank area at the time.

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission spokesman Roger Hannah confirmed that Westinghouse notified his agency as a courtesy.

“My understanding is it did not involve exposure of any kind to radiological material that we would regulate,” Hannah said when a reporter reached him after he had left his Atlanta office.

The company also notified the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. “We received a courtesy notification this morning from the Westinghouse nuclear fuel facility that an incident had occurred at that location,” DHEC spokesman Jim Beasley said in a statement. “We are aware of no threat posed to either the public’s health or the environment as a result.”

Columbia Fire Chief Aubrey Jenkins said firefighters got a 911 medical call at 4:38 a.m. A rescue truck went to the plant and helped medical personnel who were there.

The plant has its own fire and medical departments, Barfield said.

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<https://www.thestate.com/news/local/article36637578.html>