

N364. Pickering Leak Contained

Pickering A was closed down on 10 December after 130 metric tons of heavy water moderator-coolant leaked on to the reactor chamber floor. The leak was contained in the reactor and no radiation was released into the environment. It was the first time an emergency coolant injection system has been activated in a Canadian-designed CANDU unit.

The initial fault occurred in a relief valve that protects the main system from over pressurization. This unexpectedly opened. Although the cause is not clear, subsequent inspection revealed damage to the mechanism which supplies high-pressure instrument air supply to valves.

Operators had to go into the boiler room to shut down the turbine manually, although they suffered no significant dose of radiation.

Taken from, "Pickering Leak Contained," pg.11, ATOM, January/February 1995.