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## Frozen power lines shut down Pilgrim

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PLYMOUTH — Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station shut down at 4 a.m. today, due to a series of power-related problems, both on and off site.

At this point, there is no estimated time for restart of the reactor, Entergy spokeswoman Lauren Burm said.

Neil Sheehan, spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said the plant was initially powered down to about 80 percent last night in anticipation of the storm. NRC had assigned inspectors to the site to advise Entergy staff. Problems with electric power being supplied to the plant from the off site power grid then occurred.

“After one of the two 345-kilovolt lines that supplies off-site power from the grid to the plant went down, Pilgrim operators began reducing power further,” Sheehan said. “The reactor was at about 50-percent power when the second 345-KV line went down.”

Plymouth Fire Chief Ed Bradley said the plant switched to power from its own generators as soon as problems with the offsite power began.

“During the power down, transmission lines that deliver power out of the station froze,” Bradley said.

That triggered an automatic shutdown of the reactor at about 4 a.m.

Sheehan noted such an automatic shutdown, known as a scram, is what the reactor’s protection system is designed to do in such circumstances.

“The exact cause of the loss of 345-KV power lines is still being investigated,” Sheehan said. Some arcing of electricity in the plant’s switch yard may have caused the offsite power loss, but the NRC said further investigation is needed.

“The NRC is continuing to monitor the cool down of the reactor and any troubleshooting involving the loss of off-site power,” he said.

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