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## **Overheated pump forces power cut at Comanche Peak**

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TU Electric was forced to sharply cut power at its Comanche Peak nuclear power plant Wednesday night after a feedwater pump serving the Unit 2 steam generator overheated. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission said power was cut by 75 percent. No radioactive steam or other material was released in the incident, said TU Electric spokesman Jerry Lee. Lee disputed accusations from a nuclear watchdog group that it reflects a pattern of repair problems at the plant.

The affected pump is one of two that return water to a steam generator after steam turns turbines to make electricity, Lee said. That water is separate from radioactive water that cools nuclear fuel, he said.

Nevertheless, Betty Brink of Texas Citizen Action, a frequent Comanche Peak critic, said the pump problem is serious because it continues a trend of repair difficulties at the plant.

"If there's problems in a feedwater pump, that's cause for alarm because they've had feedwater problems in the past," Brink said. "This is part of a pattern of breakdowns."

Lee acknowledged that the plant has had repeated problems with pumps, but he said that that did not reflect an unusual trend or safety problem.

He said such a large reduction in power is costly. "Sure, a loss of 550 megawatts of generating power is expensive."

However, Lee added that TU planned to shut down Unit 2 within a week anyway to refuel and that TU had ample power to meet customer needs.

Correction: CLARIFICATION: Betty Brink is a member of Citizens for Fair Utility Regulation. Her affiliation is incorrect in this article.(10/1/94)