

Georgia nuclear reactor idled unexpectedly still shut down



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ATLANTA (Reuters) – A reactor at a nuclear power plant in Georgia remained out of service on Friday after it shut down unexpectedly earlier this week when a breaker failed.

Carrie Phillips, a spokeswoman for Southern Nuclear, which operates the plant in Waynesboro, Ga., declined to say when the nuclear unit would be back in operation.

But she said the company had replaced the breaker that tripped on Wednesday, as well as related equipment, and that plant employees were now "going through the process to look at our restart activities to return that unit to 100 percent."

The unit is one of two at the Plant Vogtle nuclear power plant. Each unit has production capacity of 1,215 megawatts. The first unit went into operation in 1987 and the second in 1989, according to the utility's web site.

Last year, Plant Vogtle received support from the U.S. Department of Energy to begin construction of two new nuclear units at Plant Vogtle.

When construction begins, the units will be the first new nuclear facility in the United States to be built in 30 years.

(Reporting by James B. Kelleher and David Beasley. Editing by Peter Bohan)