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## Point Lepreau Nuclear Station Equipment Sinks

**Nuclear rotors, brand new, some water damage: pick up only**

SAINT JOHN — Two huge turbine rotors destined for New Brunswick's Point Lepreau nuclear generating station are lying on the bottom of Saint John harbour after the barge they were being loaded on flipped over Wednesday.

“One turbine had been secured but the barge became unstable as the second rotor was being loaded,” said Bill Eaton, a spokesman for the Saint John Port Authority.

No one was hurt in the morning incident, but officials of Worksafe New Brunswick were called in to investigate. Mr. Eaton said the investigation could take up to a week.

Heather-Anne MacLean, a spokesperson for NB Power, said the 107-tonne rotors had recently arrived from Siemens in the United Kingdom and were due to be installed during the refurbishment of the reactor at Point Lepreau.

In fact, last week the utility issued an update on the \$1.4-billion refurbishment, which included a notice that the turbines had arrived.

“In preparation for its arrival, officials from NB Power, Siemens, Irving Equipment, Atlantic Towing and representatives from the local community met to plan the movement of the equipment to ensure its safe and efficient delivery to site,” the update stated.

Ms. MacLean said it's too early to determine the fate of the rotors, which are under 10 metres of water. The utility, she added, has a contingency plan to keep the project on time.

“We have the older turbine rotors still on site and we could use those in the interim,” she said.

Officials did not have any immediate dollar figure on the cost of the incident, or who might have to foot the bill.

The rotors are the central portion of the generators that spin to create electricity.

By late afternoon, port officials said there had been no environmental problems as a result of the capsized barge, which was overturned but on the surface.

“That's certainly going to be monitored, but the only issue we are aware of is the potential for diesel to leak,” said Ms. Eaton.

The refurbishment project began in March and is intended to extend the life of Atlantic Canada's only nuclear power plant by 25 years. The entire project is scheduled to be finished by the end of September 2009.