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NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO FINE NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY  
\$50,000 FOR A PROPOSED VIOLATION AT MILLSTONE 3

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited Northeast Nuclear Energy Company for allegedly failing to identify and correct conditions adverse to quality at its Millstone Unit 3 nuclear power station, in Waterford, Connecticut. The staff is proposing a \$50,000 fine.

A NRC inspection at the plant in June and July 1991 determined Millstone employees did not aggressively determine the cause of and correct a reduction in water flow through the service water system caused by a buildup of mussels in the piping. The NRC staff alleges workers did not verify whether the service water system could perform its intended design function after cleaning out the mussels and did not try to determine the cause of the condition.

Plant design requires the diesel generators, which use this service water for engine cooling, be capable of operating for a full 24 hours at full load. An extended flow test, performed after the NRC raised some concerns, found that only 15 percent of the required cooling water flow was available for the "B" diesel generator.

In a letter to Northeast Nuclear, Thomas T. Martin, Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, said "The NRC is concerned that although there were numerous indications during the June and July 1991 timeframe, that service water flow to system components in this train was significantly degraded, you did not properly analyze this evident trend. Furthermore, although the diesel generator heat exchangers were cleaned on eight separate occasions during that period, you did not verify whether system design functions were affected by the mussel fouling."

Northeast Nuclear now has 30 days to submit a written statement to the NRC admitting or denying the alleged violations, explaining the reasons for them if admitted, stating the corrective actions which have been or will be taken, and the date when full compliance with NRC regulations was or will be achieved. The licensees also has 30 days to pay the proposed fine or to request that all or part of it be withdrawn.

The State of Connecticut has been informed of this proposed enforcement action.

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