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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$100,000 FINE AGAINST GEORGIA POWER  
FOR ALLEGED VIOLATION AT VOGTLE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$100,000 civil penalty against Georgia Power Company for alleged violation of NRC requirements at the Vogtle nuclear power plant, located near Waynesboro, Georgia, about 30 miles southeast of Augusta.

NRC officials said the action was taken based upon information from an investigation by the agency's Office of Investigations which was completed on March 19, 1991. The NRC received information in January 1990, that the plant has been intentionally placed in a condition prohibited by its technical specifications when valves to a Unit 1 reactor water storage tank were opened to facilitate cleaning of the reactor coolant system. The event occurred in October of 1988.

The NRC said that, after careful deliberation, it had concluded that a willful violation of regulatory requirements could not be substantiated. However, the agency notified Georgia Power that it had determined that several plant operators and operations management personnel had placed the plant in an unanalyzed condition by placing the valves in an open condition during the reactor cooling system cleaning when the technical specifications require that they be closed.

The NRC said the base civil penalty for the violation was \$50,000 but that it was increased to \$100,000 in this case because the violation was identified by the NRC instead of the plant staff and because no long-term corrective action was taken to prevent recurrence. After extensive review and analysis, the NRC staff authorized the technical specifications to be changed to allow the valves to be opened for the system cleaning operation.

The company has 30 days from receipt of the Notice of Violation to either pay the civil penalty or to protest it, in whole or in part.

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