

No. 93-137
Tel. 301-504-2240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Tuesday, September 21, 1993)

NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO FINE NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY
\$50,000 FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS AT MILLSTONE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited Northeast Nuclear Energy Company for two violations of NRC requirements at the Millstone Nuclear Power Station in Waterford, CT. The staff has proposed a \$50,000 fine.

An NRC inspection of Northeast's licensed operator regualification training (LORT) program was conducted in April and May of this year to, among other things, assess the LORT programs at the three Millstone units and to independently assess the root cause of the repetitive unsatisfactory rating for Unit 1's training program in September 1991, and in September 1992.

Millstone's technical specifications require that NRC-licensed operators successfully complete the facility's regualification program. NRC inspectors found that numerous licensed operators had missed at least one regualification training session and did not make up the content element. The technical specifications also require that Northeast Nuclear's Nuclear Review Board perform audits which include programs for training, qualification and performance of the operating staff. Between January 1987 and January 1993, the audits of the licensed operator training program either were not performed or were not performed adequately.

In a letter to Northeast Nuclear, Thomas T. Martin, Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, said, "The NRC recognizes that the potential safety consequences of the violations was lessened by the fact that all of the licensed operators who missed the training classes did demonstrate proficiency and overall knowledge in subsequent periodic and annual examinations. Nevertheless, the NRC is concerned that despite your Unit 1 regualification training program being determined unsatisfactory by the NRC in 1991, corrective actions taken at the time to improve the program were not effective in precluding these violations and did not prevent the program from being unsatisfactory in 1992."

The normal fine for such violations is \$50,000. In this case, it could have been increased because the NRC found the alleged violations, however, it was not, because of the extensive corrective actions the company took after the violations were found.

Northeast Nuclear Energy Company has 30 days either to pay the proposed fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn, giving its reasons for any such request. The utility also has 30 days to admit or deny the alleged violations, to give reasons for them if admitted, to describe the actions it has taken or plans to take to prevent their happening in the future, and to give the date by which it expects to be in full compliance with NRC requirements.

The NRC administered a requalification examination to 15 licensed operators (comprising 3 crews) at Millstone Unit 1 during the week of September 13-17, 1993. Preliminary NRC results indicate that all three crews and all 15 individuals passed those examinations.

The State of Connecticut was informed of this enforcement action.

#