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NRC TO RESTRUCTURE REGIONAL FUNCTIONS IN WEST;
WALNUT CREEK TO BE FIELD OFFICE

In an action to reduce costs, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has decided to restructure its two regional offices in the western United States. Regional activities will be consolidated at Arlington, Texas. NRC presence will be maintained at the current regional office at Walnut Creek, CA, which will become a field office with nuclear reactor inspection and oversight responsibilities at four operating commercial reactor sites and at various university/research reactor sites. Responsibilities for inspection and oversight of byproduct material licensees in both regions will be consolidated at Arlington, Texas.

The changes will be effective next summer. An estimated 37 positions will be transferred from Walnut Creek to Arlington. The field office will retain a staff of about 25 persons including resident inspectors at reactor sites. All Walnut Creek employees will be offered positions in Arlington, other regions or Washington. Estimated cost savings over the next five years are between \$5.4 million and \$7.7 million.

In announcing the action, NRC Chairman Ivan Selin said:

"I believe the establishment of a field office in Walnut Creek with limited responsibility for day-to-day activities of the power reactor program, plus a public affairs officer, will enable the NRC to maintain a West Coast presence while achieving important cost

efficiencies by consolidating the remaining functions at Arlington, Texas. We will work with affected employees to help make the transition as smooth as possible."

The field office at Walnut Creek will have a senior-level director reporting to the regional office at Arlington. This manager will be supported by a technical and administrative staff and a public affairs officer. The field office will be responsible for day-to-day oversight of the NRC inspection program at the Palo Verde nuclear power site in Arizona, the San Onofre and Diablo Canyon sites in California, and the Washington Public Power Supply System plant in Washington state, as well as inspection of university/research reactors located in Region V.