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NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO FINE NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY $100,000

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited the New York Power Authority (NYPA) for three alleged violations of NRC requirements relating to the recent condition of the service water system at Unit 3 of the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, New York, and is proposing a fine of $100,000.

During NRC inspections of the service water system between May and July of this year, inspectors found several places where the system's piping leaked. Although, in many instances, the leaks had been found by plant staff, the leaks were not appropriately evaluated and repaired.

In a letter to the NYPA, Thomas T. Martin, Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, said, "The NRC recognizes that the service water system would have performed its intended safety function, notwithstanding the existing conditions. However, these failures to correct adverse conditions, as well as the failures to properly evaluate any changes in the facility prior to making those changes, demonstrates a breakdown in the control of licensed activities at Indian Point 3 that collectively represent a potentially significant lack of attention toward licensed responsibilities."

The fine for such violations is normally $50,000. However, in this case, the fine was doubled because the violations were identified by the NRC and for poor past performance over the past two years.

The NYPA has 30 days to either pay the proposed fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn, giving its reasons for any such request.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 Power Authority 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 State of New York has been informed of this enforcement action.

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