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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$25,000 CIVIL PENALTY AGAINST DUKE POWER FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF NRC REQUIREMENTS AT MCGUIRE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$25,000 civil penalty against Duke Power Company for alleged violation of NRC requirements at the McGuire nuclear power plant, located near Charlotte, North Carolina.

In a Notice of Violation sent to the company on January 13, 1994, NRC officials said that the penalty was being proposed following review of the report of an NRC Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) which visited the plant September 1-5, 1993, to review and evaluate circumstances associated with a Unit 2 steam leak on August 31, 1993, which resulted in a personnel injury, unplanned containment pressurization and actuation of the Unit 2 ice condensers which are used to lower containment pressure during emergency conditions.

During the August 31 event, a technician inside the Unit 2 containment building told the control room that there was a steam leak around one of the steam generators. Operations had just noticed an increase in containment building temperature and pressure and had received a signal that ice condenser doors were open. Two technicians who worked for a supplier were inside the containment conducting a leak repair procedure on an incorrectly assembled drain valve on the steam generator. While performing the repair, a pipe end cap blew off because of the incorrectly assembled valve, resulting in a steam leak which caused second degree burns on the legs of one of the technicians. The unit was cooled down in a controlled manner which eventually stopped the leaking steam. However, at one point operators inadvertently allowed the reactor coolant system temperature to increase above specified limits. All personnel inside containment at the time of the event were accounted for, and no other injuries were reported.

The Notice of Violation cited the company for failure to ensure safe operation of Unit 2 systems because the Unit was inadvertently allowed to go from hot shutdown to hot standby and failure to ensure that adequate procedures and measures were established for the proper repair and reassembly of the valve.

The base civil penalty for these violations is \$50,000, but the NRC said it was reduced in this case because the company did a good analysis of the causes of the problem and took immediate corrective actions related to the problem with the valve.

The NRC sent a second Augmented Inspection Team to McGuire after Unit 2 experienced a loss of offsite power on December 27, 1993. During this event, a main steam isolation valve which had apparently not been properly tested failed to fully close, causing a steam generator

to boil dry. That team briefed reporters on January 6, 1994, but NRC officials have not completed review of its findings and have made no decisions related to possible escalated enforcement action.

The company has thirty days from receipt of the Notice of Violation to either pay the civil penalty related to the August 31 event or to protest its imposition.

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