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NRC BEGINS INSPECTION ACTIVITIES AT PADUCAH AND PORTSMOUTH GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has placed resident inspectors and established an inspection agreement with the Department of Energy (DOE) for the U.S. Enrichment Corporation's (USEC) gaseous diffusion uranium enrichment plants at Portsmouth, Ohio, and Paducah, Kentucky. These actions are in preparation for NRC's regulatory oversight of the plants, which have been under DOE jurisdiction.

The plants at Portsmouth and Paducah enrich uranium by a gaseous diffusion process for use as fuel in commercial nuclear power plants in the United States and abroad.

A NRC Senior Resident Inspector is already stationed at each plant and an agreement establishing guidance for NRC inspection activities was entered into between the DOE and the NRC in August. Under the DOE and NRC agreement, up to three NRC resident inspectors will be located at each plant site.

Kenneth G. O'Brien is the Senior Resident Inspector located at USEC's Paducah, Kentucky, Gaseous Diffusion Plant. O'Brien has been a resident inspector at the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Station in Wisconsin and a reactor engineer for NRC's midwest regional office. Previous to NRC, O'Brien worked for DOE as a health physicist and for the State of Wisconsin as a radiation consultant. He has a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Wisconsin.

Charles Cox is the Senior Resident Inspector stationed at USEC's Portsmouth, Ohio, Gaseous Diffusion Plant. Cox has been a radiation specialist and was involved in the Gaseous Diffusion Task Force for NRC's midwest regional office. Prior to NRC, Cox was a nuclear submarine division officer in the U.S. Navy, a senior reactor operator at the Fast Flux Test Facility in Washington, and an emergency planning coordinator and licensing engineer for several utilities. He has a bachelor's degree in

chemistry from the University of Washington.

Additional resident inspectors will be assigned to each gaseous diffusion plant in the future.

Pending NRC's development of safety standards and subsequent Certificate of Compliances for the two USEC plants, the DOE will continue its regulatory oversight of nuclear safety, safeguards and security. During the interim period in preparation for NRC's regulatory oversight, the NRC resident inspectors will review programs and activities of USEC's operation. Additionally, they will conduct assessments for the purpose of gathering information for development and implementation of NRC standards.

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