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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO FINE ENTERGY OPERATIONS \$112,500
FOR APPARENT SECURITY VIOLATIONS AT RIVER BEND STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has informed Entergy Operations Inc. that it proposes to fine the company \$112,500 for apparent violations of NRC physical security requirements at the River Bend Station near St. Francisville, Louisiana.

Entergy has 30 days to respond to the citation. During that time, it may pay the civil penalty or protest it. If a protest is denied, the company may ask for a hearing.

NRC is taking this action as the result of inspections and investigations conducted at River Bend between April 1992 and August 1993. These findings also were discussed at an NRC enforcement conference with Entergy representatives held on January 6 of this year.

The civil penalty is based on these violations documented by NRC:

(1) On two occasions — September 15, 1992, and March 23-24, 1993 — safeguards information documents left unattended were not locked in a security storage container. In the first instance, the documents had been unsecured about seven months. In the second instance, they were unattended for about six hours.

(2) From December 6 to December 10, 1991, a door was degraded by the installation of a thumb latch that permitted individuals to move readily from a protected area to a vital area. Although such conditions, once discovered, are required to be recorded in a safeguards events log within 24 hours, it was three days before this one was logged.

In his letter to Entergy concerning the civil penalty, NRC Regional Administrator L. Joe Callan noted that the violations occurred when the River Bend plant was operated by the former licensee, Gulf States Utilities. He further acknowledged that Entergy Operations has taken some remedial steps and plans other corrective measures.

But Mr. Callan said NRC has concluded that enforcement action is appropriate for the present licensee to emphasize NRC's concern about (a) the lack of past management sensitivity to physical security problems at River Bend; and (b) the apparent willful and recurring nature of some of the violations.

"Overall," Mr. Callan wrote, "the violations are indicative of a failure on the part of the former licensee to effectively manage the [River Bend] security program."

In a related action concerning these incidents, the NRC staff also has issued a formal Notice of Violation, without a civil penalty, to the former River Bend director of nuclear station security. This citation is based on investigation findings that this individual, during the time he held the plant security post, willfully degraded a vital area barrier, willfully failed to log safeguards events, and willfully transported safeguards information from another facility where he previously worked and shared it with individuals at River Bend who had no need to know it.

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