

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
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No. 97-63-II

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Tuesday, September 2, 1997)

**NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$55,000 FINE AGAINST SURRY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$55,000 civil penalty against Virginia Power for violations of NRC requirements relating to maintenance at the Surry nuclear power plant near Surry, Virginia.

The violations are directly related to Virginia Power's failure to meet the requirements of 10 CFR 50.65, "Requirements for Monitoring the Effectiveness of Maintenance at Nuclear Power Plants." That regulation, called the maintenance rule, became effective in July 1996 and was designed to ensure licensees evaluate the effectiveness of maintenance to minimize the likelihood of failure of safety-significant equipment. The maintenance rule sets forth requirements for monitoring the effectiveness of maintenance and not for performing maintenance.

In a letter to Virginia Power, NRC Regional Administrator Luis Reyes writes that "Surry has a good performance record in the maintenance area" and that the company has improved the condition of the plant and replaced unreliable equipment. However, the letter says Virginia Power had not fully integrated the maintenance rule into appropriate programs at Surry and "the failure to implement requirements of the maintenance rule is considered to be a significant regulatory concern."

The first violation cited involved the failure to include some equipment in a program to monitor performance against established goals as required by the maintenance rule. The second violation included seven examples of failures to demonstrate that structures, systems or components within the scope of the rule had appropriate preventive maintenance to remain capable of performing their function. Other violations were related to a significant failure to establish and implement maintenance rule procedures at the plant. The NRC staff has proposed a \$55,000 civil penalty for all the violations.

The company has 30 days from receipt of the Notice of Violation to either pay the fine or protest its imposition.

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