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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$55,000 FINE AGAINST NU
FOR ALLEGED SECURITY VIOLATIONS AT MILLSTONE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$55,000 fine for Northeast Utilities (NU) for two alleged violations of NRC requirements at its Millstone Nuclear Power Station in Waterford, Ct. The alleged violations were discussed during a predecisional enforcement conference on April 7.

NU was cited for seven examples of failing to control safeguards information at the facility between November 1996 and March 1997, and 37 incidents in which keys were found in unattended vehicles in the protected area. The site security plan requires that vehicles be immobilized with keys controlled when not in use. Safeguards information relates to security measures for the physical protection of special nuclear material or for physical protection of certain plant equipment.

In a letter to the company, NRC Special Projects Office Director William Travers said, "These violations represent a significant lack of attention to security responsibilities by not only your security staff and supervision, but also, and more importantly, by those site employees and contractor employees who did not follow security requirements. At the enforcement conference, your staff acknowledged that site personnel did not consistently assume appropriate individual responsibility of security requirements, and that corrective actions for previous occurrences of the same violations have been ineffective. Given the repetitive and continuing nature of these two violations, they represent a significant regulatory concern with respect to degradation of the security program at the facility."

NU also was cited, but not fined, for the failure to perform a hand search of a person granted access to the protected area after the person caused an alarm while being checked with a hand-held metal detector.

NU has 30 days either to pay the proposed fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn.

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