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NRC TO CLOSE CALIFORNIA FIELD OFFICE IN 1998

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has decided to close the agency's Region IV Field Office in Walnut Creek, Calif., by October 1998, and to consolidate its functions with the Region IV office in Arlington, Texas.

This decision is expected to sustain the effectiveness of the programs for which the Walnut Creek Field Office has been responsible, while achieving efficiencies in the long run. The Walnut Creek Field Office was established in April 1994 with the consolidation of the former Region V office in Walnut Creek with the Region IV office.

NRC staff officials have begun to work on a specific closure plan which will be presented to the Commission for approval by the end of this calendar year. Appropriate discussions are being scheduled between NRC staff management and the National Treasury Employees Union. All affected employees will be offered positions within the agency.

The 30-person field office, under the direction of NRC's Region IV office, has been utilized for inspections at operating nuclear power plants throughout Region IV. It also has been responsible for licensing and inspection of nuclear materials and fuel facility licensees in Alaska and Hawaii, and for licensing and inspection oversight in the agreement states of Arizona, California, Washington, Nevada and Oregon. Also stationed in Walnut Creek are a public affairs officer, an NRC investigator, a state liaison officer and an agreement states officer.

After the Walnut Creek office closes, all these functions will be combined with comparable existing activities in Arlington. In addition to the seven states mentioned above, Region IV is responsible for NRC-regulated functions in Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and Wyoming. Region IV also is responsible for nuclear power plant inspections in Mississippi and Missouri.

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