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**NRC PROPOSES \$55,000 FINE FOR VIOLATION AT SUSQUEHANNA PLANT;
AGENCY CITES LACK OF CONTROLS OVER EMERGENCY DIESEL GENERATOR**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$55,000 fine against the operator of the Susquehanna nuclear power plant for a violation of agency requirements involving a misaligned emergency diesel generator at the facility. Susquehanna, which is equipped with two reactors, is located in Berwick, in northeastern Pennsylvania. It is owned and operated by PP&L Inc.

A predecisional enforcement conference was held on December 16 at the NRC Region 1 office in King of Prussia, Pa., to discuss the infraction.

Susquehanna has five emergency diesel generators. In the event of a loss of power to the site, the generators would be called upon to operate safety-related systems and safely shut down the plant.

Last July 11, an NRC inspector found that the load limit setting on one of the generators had been positioned at approximately 35 percent, when it should have remained at 100 percent. The misalignment, which was subsequently determined to have occurred sometime between June 16 and July 11, could have resulted in the generator not starting within the required time and not being able to provide sufficient emergency backup power during an accident. Furthermore, the operation of the generator at a lower-than-normal speed could have damaged emergency core cooling system motors.

PP&L investigated the misalignment but was unable to determine the cause, though the utility did not rule out that it may have been the result of a work sequence error, inadvertent human interaction or tampering. The company has since taken steps to prevent a recurrence, including the installation of a protective cover over the controls, known as the Woodward governor.

The NRC staff has found that PP&L committed a violation

by failing to establish adequate controls for the generator's alignment.

In a letter to PP&L announcing the enforcement action, NRC Region 1 Administrator Hubert J. Miller said that failure caused "important safety-related equipment to be inoperable for an indeterminate period, thus degrading the plant's capability to respond to accidents."

"Further, the NRC is concerned that you failed to implement effective controls for the alignment of the Woodward governor controls despite the fact that multiple events involving the functioning of the Woodward governors have been identified in the industry between 1985 and the present," including three at Susquehanna, Mr. Miller wrote. "Also, the NRC is concerned that your investigation of the event could not preclude tampering as a cause and that the investigations revealed at least two other recent instances of unexplained misalignment of out-of-service EDGs (emergency diesel generators) similar to the misalignment of the 'A' EDG."

The administrator added that it appeared that personnel performance issues were persisting at the plant, and that there was an "adverse trend in equipment status control events."

PP&L has 30 days to pay the fine or request in writing that all or part of the penalty be withdrawn.

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