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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$55,000 FINE FOR MAINTENANCE RULE
VIOLATIONS AT QUAD CITIES STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$55,000 fine against Commonwealth Edison Company for maintenance program violations at the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station. The facility is in Cordova, Illinois.

The utility was cited for 18 violations involving the failure to implement an adequate program for monitoring the effectiveness of maintenance done on plant systems and equipment. The NRC maintenance rule, adopted in July 1996, is designed to minimize the likelihood of failures of equipment important to safety.

During an inspection last August and September, NRC found that the Commonwealth Edison failed, among other things, to establish goals and monitoring for systems and equipment, as the maintenance rule requires. In two instances, the utility took no action after it became clear that the type of preventive maintenance being performed on systems and equipment was not effective in preventing a functional failure.

In his letter notifying the utility of the proposed fine, NRC Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach said the violations show a "programmatic breakdown" in Commonwealth Edison's compliance with the NRC maintenance rule.

"The NRC concludes that actions taken to implement the Maintenance Rule had not been fully integrated into the appropriate programs at Quad Cities," Beach said. "Although a corporate assessment did identify many of the issues in a June 1997 effort, the Quad Cities staff failed to take appropriate action to understand the full extent of the issues and address them. It was only after NRC inspectors identified the extensiveness of the deficiencies, that aggressive, substantive actions were implemented."

Mr. Beach noted that Commonwealth Edison has taken a number of corrective actions including: reviewing standards with an expert panel; training of system engineers; and performing a program independent assessment. In addition, after the

maintenance rule program issues were identified in September of last year, the utility implemented a plan to re-examine and revise, the program for the Braidwood, LaSalle, and Zion facilities.

Commonwealth Edison has until April 2 to pay the fine or to protest it. If the fine is protested and subsequently imposed by the NRC staff, the utility may request a hearing.

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