



NRC NEWS

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION IV**

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NRC FINES CALLAWAY \$55,000 FOR RETALIATION AGAINST SECURITY PERSONNEL

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$55,000 fine against Union Electric Company, the operator of Callaway Nuclear Plant near Fulton, Missouri, for retaliation against security personnel who identified a violation of NRC requirements.

The basic facts are that a security guard, employed in a temporary status by The Wackenhut Corporation, brought to the attention of managers the fact that a guard trainee did not have a high school diploma as required for the job. Wackenhut terminated the trainee, as required, but then also terminated the security guard who identified the concern and reprimanded a security training instructor who brought the concern forward, for reasons that the NRC found to be discriminatory. The NRC found that this action violated regulations prohibiting retaliation against workers who bring safety issues to management.

Although the retaliatory action was taken by the contractor, The Wackenhut Corporation, Union Electric management participated in the action and is held responsible as the operator of the plant. Since the violation was identified, Union Electric has taken measures to reassure workers that they are expected and encouraged to bring forward safety concerns without fear of retaliation in accordance with NRC expectations that nuclear plant operators maintain a safety conscious work environment.

The NRC is also issuing a Notice of Violation against The Wackenhut Corporation as a result of its actions in this case.

Ellis W. Merschoff, NRC Regional Administrator, said in a letter to Garry L. Randolph, Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer for Union Electric: "To emphasize the significance of this violation and the importance of maintaining a safety conscious work environment at the Callaway Nuclear Plant, I have been authorized . . . to issue the enclosed Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalty (Notice) in the base amount of \$55,000 for this Severity Level III violation."

The NRC classifies violations on a four-level scale, with Level I being the most serious. Union Electric has 30 days to respond in writing to the NRC's Notice of Violation. During this period, the company may pay the fine or file a protest.

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