



# Nuclear Reactor Laboratory

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February 18, 2004

US Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
ATTN: Document Control Desk  
Washington, DC 20555

Re: License R-74, Docket 50-156

On Wednesday, February 4, 2004, it was discovered that a violation of 10 CFR 55.21, had occurred. The circumstances and subsequent action are indicated below.

#### Description of Event:

In May 2003, five licensed reactor operators were instructed to submit to biennial medical exams as required by 10 CFR 55.21. Four of the five reactor operators were able to complete the required physical exam. The fifth reactor operator was not able to submit to the physical exam prior to leaving the facility for a summer cooperative educational internship with the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. At that time, it was decided to include the physical exam as part of the re-qualification program that the operator must complete upon returning to the facility, prior to resuming licensed activities. Upon returning to the facility in September, an oversight by management, allowed the reactor operator to resume licensed activities without completing the required physical. On February 4, 2004, it was discovered that the operator had failed to submit to the physical exam upon returning to the facility and resuming licensed activities; as such, a period of 33 months had elapsed between medical exams. This is a violation of 10 CFR 55.21 which states, in part: "A licensee shall have a medical examination by a physician every two years."

#### Corrective Actions:

Immediate corrective actions taken upon discovery of the violation was to require the operator to immediately submit to the medical exam. The results of the exam indicated the operator's medical condition and general health did not adversely affect the performance of assigned operator job duties or cause operational errors endangering public health and safety.

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Follow up corrective actions to prevent reoccurrence of this event include the following. All licensed personnel are required to resubmit to medical exams. This action will ensure all operators will have a common medical exam date. Previously, medical exams dates were associated with the date of each reactor operator's license renewal date, and thus were spread through out the year. A procedure change request has been submitted to modify the UWNR 100, Surveillance Activities Procedure, to include a check-off for medial exams in February of even numbered years and an audit of medical exam records in odd numbered years. It is believed that the requirement for medical exams during the academic year will prevent the original situation that led to the operator not being present at the facility due to a summer internship.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Agasie  
Reactor Director

cc: Compliance Inspector, Region II, Craig Bassett  
Facility Project Manager, Patrick Isaac  
Reactor Safety Committee, RSC Document 798