

No: II-15-009

March 11, 2015

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NRC Proposes \$70,000 Fine for Violations at Sequoyah Nuclear Plant

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has proposed a \$70,000 civil penalty against the Tennessee Valley Authority for violations related to fire watches at the Sequoyah nuclear power plant near Soddy-Daisy, Tenn., about 18 miles northeast of Chattanooga.

An NRC investigation found that on numerous occasions in October and November 2012, some of TVA's contract fire watch workers failed to actually walk through certain areas as required and, along with their supervisors, deliberately recorded that those actions had been completed.

The violations did not result in any actual safety consequences as no fires occurred in those areas during the time the fire watches were missed.

"The potential consequences of missed fire watches concern us," said NRC Region II Administrator Victor McCree. "Although there are other fire protection features, fire watches are an important part of the plant's overall fire protection strategy, especially in areas where other equipment may be temporarily unavailable."

Based on the severity of the violations and the plant's recent enforcement history, the NRC staff found that a \$70,000 civil penalty was warranted. In a January 2015 letter, TVA outlined corrective actions already taken and planned to correct the violations and prevent recurrence. The NRC plans to inspect those corrective actions to ensure that they adequately address the issue. The NRC does not plan to take additional action against any of the individuals responsible.

TVA has 30 days to pay the civil penalty or protest its imposition.