



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

CENTRAL FILES
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LPDR
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NSIC

July 26, 1979

Docket No. 50-298

Nebraska Public Power District
ATTN: J. M. Pilant, Director
Licensing & Quality Assurance
Post Office Box 499
Columbus, Nebraska 68601

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is IE Bulletin No. 79-16 which requires action by you with regard to your reactor facility.

Should you have questions regarding this Bulletin or the actions required of you, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

James H. Seyfrit / acting
Karl V. Seyfrit
Director

Enclosures:

1. IE Bulletin No. 79-16
2. List of IE Bulletins
Issued in Last 12
Months

cc: L. C. Iessor, Superintendent
Cooper Nuclear Station
Post Office Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska 68321

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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VITAL AREA ACCESS CONTROLS

Description of Circumstances

An attempt to damage new fuel assemblies occurred recently at an operating nuclear reactor facility. During a routine fuel inspection, the licensee discovered that a chemical liquid had been poured over 62 of 64 new fuel assemblies. Analysis indicates that the chemical liquid was sodium hydroxide, a chemical stored and used onsite.

The licensee stores new fuel assemblies in dry storage wells on the same elevation as the spent fuel pool within the Fuel Building, a vital area. Access to the building is controlled by use of a coded key card which electronically unlocks the alarmed personnel portals. The licensee issues coded key cards to both licensee and contractor personnel after the successful completion of a background screening program. In addition, licensee site management certifies monthly that each individual has the need for a coded key card in order to perform required duties. Further access within this building is not limited by other barriers or controls.

As a result of this incident, an initial licensee audit determined that several hundred licensee and contractor personnel had access to this area during the period when the attempt to damage the fuel was made. The audit also revealed that one coded key card reader at a vital area portal was inaccurately recording access data at the alarm station. Also discovered during this audit were indications of frequent "tailgating" on access through the portals. Tailgating occurs when more than one person passes through a portal on one person's authorized access. Their passage is therefore not recorded, and unauthorized persons could gain entry in this manner. Tailgating does not include authorized access controlled by an escort.

10 CFR 73.55(a) requires the licensees to protect against industrial sabotage committed by an insider in any position. 10 CFR 73.55(d)(7) states that access to Vital Areas shall be positively controlled and limited to individuals who are authorized access to vital equipment and who require such access to perform their duties. Specific commitments implementing this regulation are described in each licensee's approved Security Plan.

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