

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Region III Office of Public Affairs
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NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT: RIII-96-13
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NRC STAFF TO HOLD CONFERENCE WITH DETROIT EDISON COMPANY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet on April 15, 1996, in Lisle, Illinois, with representatives of Detroit Edison Company for a predecisional enforcement conference to discuss recent inspection findings at the Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant at Monroe, Michigan.

The meeting, which is open to public observation, will begin at 1:00 p.m. (CDT). It will take place in the Third Floor Conference Room at the NRC Region III Office, 801 Warrenville Road, Lisle, Illinois.

The meeting will focus on the apparent lack of recognition by operators and management at Fermi to consider the potential for failure of redundant safety equipment. On February 5, one of the pumps used to provide cooling water for a safety-related emergency diesel generator became blocked by ice and failed to work.

The diesel generators have two parallel systems providing cooling water. However, plant staff did not test the pumps in the diesel's redundant division for ice blockage until 26 hours later. When tested, there was ice blockage and, therefore, the diesel generator cooling system may have been inoperable. During the period of the cooling system blockage, the plant was operating routinely and the diesel generators were not needed.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean the NRC has determined that a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. Rather, the purpose is to discuss apparent violations, their causes and safety significance; to provide the licensee an opportunity to point out any errors in the NRC inspection report; and to enable the company to outline its proposed corrective action.

No civil penalties or other enforcement decisions will be made at this conference. Those decisions will be made by senior NRC officials at a later time.

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