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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$62,500 FINE FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS
AT LIMERICK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) for two violations of NRC radiation safety requirements at Unit 1 of its Limerick nuclear power plant. The staff has proposed a \$62,500 fine.

NRC inspectors reviewed one of the violations reported to the NRC by PECO and identified the other violation during an inspection at Limerick on September 18, 22 and 29, 1992. NRC regulations require that radiation surveys to evaluate the radiation hazard be performed before a work group enters a radiation area and that workers be instructed on how to limit their exposure to radiation before beginning work.

While making repairs on a valve in the containment building on July 7 through 9 of this year, several workers entered and worked in a high radiation area without first performing adequate surveys to sufficiently identify an intense, narrow beam of radiation passing through the work area. Failing to identify this beam created the potential for workers to receive exposures above regulatory limits, although this did not happen. Also, some of the work crews moved from one area (which had been surveyed) to another area (which had not been surveyed) because they had not been instructed to remain in the surveyed area. This led to the workers being exposed to the marrow beam of radiation as well as general radiation fields at least six times higher than had been planned.

In a letter to PECO, Thomas T. Martin, Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, said, "The fact that the individual exposures did not exceed the regulatory limits does not diminish the NRC concern with the importance of implementing proper radiological controls over activities at the facility."

The normal fine for such a violation is \$50,000. In this case, it was increased by 25 percent, to \$62,500, because the licensee's self-assessment of the event failed to identify certain details, demonstrating a lack of aggressiveness in determining the root cause of the event and corrective actions.

PECO has 30 days to either pay the proposed fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn, giving its reasons for any such request. The company also has 30 days to admit or deny the alleged violations, to give reasons for them if admitted, to describe the actions it has taken or plans to take to prevent their happening in the future and to give the date by which it expects to be in full compliance with NRC requirements.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed of this enforcement action.

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