

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Office of Public Affairs -- Region IV

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NRC, CONSTRUCTION TESTING OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATIONS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a predecisional enforcement conference next week with officials of Construction Testing & Engineering Inc., of Escondido, CA, to discuss apparent violations of NRC requirements.

The conference will begin at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at the NRC Region IV Field Office in Walnut Creek, CA. The meeting will be open to the public for observation; NRC officials will be available later for questions.

An NRC inspection conducted in December and January determined that CTE had performed work with moisture density gauges, which contain radioactive materials, on numerous occasions during the first five months of 1996 without filing proper documentation with the NRC. The violations concern work that CTE conducted on military bases in California and

CTE's failure to provide complete and accurate information to the NRC.

CTE is licensed by the state of California to use the equipment. However, using the equipment on an area of exclusive federal jurisdiction, such as a military base, requires notification and a nominal fee to the NRC.

The NRC staff considers the violations significant because CTE's failure to inform the NRC of the work denied the agency the opportunity to ensure that work was conducted by appropriately trained personnel and in accordance with safety requirements.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that NRC has made a final determination that a violation did occur or that enforcement action, such as a monetary fine, will be taken. The purpose is to discuss the apparent violation, its cause and safety significance; to provide CTE an opportunity to challenge or correct portions of the NRC inspection report; and for the company to outline its corrective actions.

No decision on the apparent violations or any enforcement action will be made at the conference. Those decisions will be made later by senior NRC officials.