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NRC CITES PALO VERDE FOR FIRES,
BUT DOES NOT ISSUE A FINE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has cited the Arizona Public Service Co. for a violation of NRC requirements in connection with fires on April 4 at the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Unit 2, about 50 miles west of Phoenix. The violation has been classified Severity Level IV, the lowest of the NRC's four enforcement classifications, and does not carry a monetary fine.

The violation concerns a failure to ensure that the plant was built as designed — in particular, to ensure that electrical equipment in a Unit 2 battery equipment room was properly grounded. An electrical fire in the battery equipment room resulted in a simultaneous fire in the control room because of the improper grounding.

The NRC is not issuing a more serious violation of fire protection requirements because the Palo Verde fire protection program was effectively implemented, both fires were promptly extinguished and the fires had no impact on safe shutdown equipment.

NRC and APS officials discussed this matter at a predecisional enforcement conference on Aug. 1 at the NRC Region IV office in Arlington, Texas. That conference, which was open to the public, was announced in a July 29 NRC news release. A copy of the NRC Notice of Violation issued to APS is available from this office.

