

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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NRC ASSUMES REGULATORY JURISDICTION
OVER URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANTS IN KENTUCKY, OHIO

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission today assumed regulatory jurisdiction over uranium enrichment plants operated by the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC). The plants are located near Paducah, Kentucky, and Portsmouth, Ohio.

USEC operates the two plants under a lease from the Department of Energy (DOE), which owns and formerly operated them. They use a gaseous diffusion process to enrich uranium hexafluoride gas in the uranium-235 isotope, so that the material can be used to produce nuclear fuel for commercial nuclear power plants.

The Energy Policy Act of 1992 directed that USEC operate the facilities and required the NRC to certify them periodically to ensure compliance with its safety, safeguards and security requirements. DOE agreed to retain oversight of the plants until the NRC finished its certification process and was ready to assume jurisdiction.

Last November, NRC issued its initial certification of compliance for the plants. The certificates provided for a transition period before NRC assumed regulatory authority--to allow USEC to complete procedural revisions and training. DOE continued regulatory oversight during this transition period, which ended at midnight last night. NRC assumed regulatory oversight at 12:01 this morning.

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**NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$50,000 FINE AGAINST FLORIDA POWER CORPORATION
FOR VIOLATIONS OF SECURITY REQUIREMENTS AT CRYSTAL
RIVER**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$50,000 civil penalty against Florida Power Corporation for alleged violations of NRC security requirements at the Crystal River nuclear power plant, located near Crystal River, Florida.

The violations involve multiple failures to implement requirements of the plant's physical security plan, identified as the result of an NRC inspection at the plant from December 2 through December 19 of last year. NRC officials said the violations included failure to have adequate implementing procedures for operation of a newly installed security computer in two alarm stations or for taking compensatory measures for the degradation of vital area doors; failure to properly respond to a protected area alarm; failure to employ the capability to assess more than one protected area alarm at a time; failure to maintain a physical barrier in one protected area location for a period in excess of 12 hours; failure to appropriately control and safeguard weapons stored in the plant armory; and failure to submit physical security plan changes to the NRC in a timely manner.

The administrator of the NRC's Region II office in Atlanta, Luis A. Reyes, said in a letter to the company that, "although the overall security program has been functioning adequately and the working level performance of the security force has been generally good...the violations are of significant regulatory concern because they are indicative of a lack of management attention to the program and a fundamental lack of understanding of regulatory requirements related to the security program."

The company has 30 days to either pay the civil penalty or to protest its imposition.

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