

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION IV
611 Ryan Plaza Drive - Suite 400
Arlington, Texas 76011-8064

RIV: 97-39
CONTACT: Breck Henderson
OFFICE: 817/860-8128
PAGER: (800) 443-7243 (065477)
E-MAIL: bwh@nrc.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 10, 1997

NRC, OPPD TO MEET FOR DISCUSSION OF APPARENT VIOLATIONS
AT FORT CALHOUN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold two predecisional enforcement conferences in July with officials of Omaha Public Power District, the operator of Fort Calhoun Station, a nuclear power plant near Fort Calhoun, Nebraska.

The first conference will be held on Monday, July 14 beginning at 1 p.m. The second will take place one week later on Monday, July 21 beginning at 10:30 a.m. Both meetings will be held in NRC Region IV offices in Arlington, Texas. The meetings will be open to public observation; NRC officials will be available afterwards for questions.

The apparent violations to be discussed in the July 14 conference were identified during inspections held between April 14 and May 2 of this year, and involve six instances where fire protection program requirements appear not to have been met.

The apparent violations include diesel generator control circuits that were not protected from fire, an inadequate alternate shutdown procedure in case of fire in a cable spreading room, an inadequate water curtain to prevent fire from spreading between fire protection areas, an inadequate reactor coolant pump motor lube oil collection system, inadequate control of fire pump operations, and a training requirement for fire brigade members that was not performed.

The July 21 conference will address an apparent violation identified during an inspection conducted between April 23 and June 10 of this year following the rupture of a large steam line and subsequent plant shutdown. Inspectors determined that there were apparent shortcomings in the program to monitor the condition of large steam piping. These shortcomings contributed to the failure to detect erosion and wear, leading to the pipe rupture. The large steam leak caused a plant transient that presented a significant challenge to the plant operators and posed a major personnel hazard.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that NRC has made a final determination that violations did occur or that enforcement action, such as a monetary fine, will be taken. The purpose is to discuss the apparent violations, their causes and safety significance, and to provide OPPD officials an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report and present corrective actions that have been taken.

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

###