

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Region III Office of Public Affairs
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NRC TO HOLD A PREDECISIONAL ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE WITH ILLINOIS
POWER COMPANY ON APPARENT VIOLATIONS AT CLINTON NUCLEAR STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet March 20 with representatives of Illinois Power Company for a predecisional enforcement conference on findings from a radiation protection inspection at the Clinton Nuclear Power Station. The station is located near Clinton, Illinois.

The meeting will start at 12:30 p.m. in the Third Floor Conference Room of the NRC Region III Office, 801 Warrenville Road, Lisle, Illinois. It will be open to public observation.

The focus will be on several apparent radiation protection violations in November and January. On November 14, three plant workers were allowed to perform work in a prohibited area of containment during refueling operations. They were in the area for about 10 minutes before Illinois Power realized they should not have been there at that time. The workers received a small fraction of the radiation dose limit, but significant radiation doses to workers could have occurred in that containment area in the event of a mishap during fuel movements.

In another instance, on January 7, three workers became contaminated with low levels of radioactive waste during a spill in the radioactive waste treatment area. As the workers were flushing sediment from a radioactive waste drum, a hose connected to a pump became blocked. When they disconnected the hose to attempt repair, it depressurized and sprayed them with low level radioactive sludge. All radioactive waste processing was halted and the three were promptly decontaminated.

Other apparent violations to be discussed include: workers not adhering to procedures when setting off personal contamination monitors; a worker exiting a posted contamination area without removing his protective outer clothing; and workers sleeping and smoking in a radiologically controlled area.

The decision to hold an enforcement conference does not mean the NRC has determined that a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. Rather, the purpose is to discuss apparent violations, their causes and safety significance; to provide the licensee an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report; and to enable the company to outline its proposed corrective actions.

No decisions on the apparent violations or any contemplated enforcement action, such as a fine, will be made at this conference. Those decisions will be made by senior NRC officials at a later date.

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