



NRC NEWS

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NRC TO DISCUSS AN APPARENT VIOLATION BY AREVA IN LYNCHBURG, VA.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, May 28 to discuss an apparent violation of NRC transportation regulations by AREVA NP, Inc. of Lynchburg, Va., associated with the shipment of equipment to the Watts Bar nuclear plant in Tennessee in early February.

The meeting, called a predecisional enforcement conference, is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m. in the NRC Region II Office on the 23rd floor of the Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, SW, in Atlanta. It will be open to the public, and those in attendance will have an opportunity to ask questions of NRC staff before the end of the meeting.

On Feb. 3, 2008, fuel cleaning equipment was transported by truck to the Watts Bar nuclear plant for use by the AREVA NP Fuel Field Services Group during a refueling outage. On Feb. 4, as the shipment was being scanned for radiation upon entering the plant, Watts Bar radiation protection personnel recorded a measurement beyond regulatory limits on the bottom of one shipping container. In response, Watts Bar staff notified the onsite contact for AREVA and made an immediate notification to the NRC Operations Center.

Later in February, an NRC inspector concluded that the event did not result in a risk to the driver, the public or the environment during or after shipment. However, the inspector determined that AREVA's procedures for decontaminating and packaging the equipment were not adequate to ensure external radiation would not exceed regulatory requirements. The inspector identified an apparent violation related to the company's failure to properly prepare the shipment package so dose limits during transportation would not be exceeded.

The purpose of the May 28 conference is to discuss the apparent violation and provide the company an opportunity to respond and to provide details of its corrective actions and other information to enable the NRC to determine what, if any, enforcement action is warranted.

No enforcement decision will be made by the NRC staff at the conference. Agency managers will make a decision following a review of information from the enforcement conference and final evaluation of the apparent violation.

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