



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region II
245 Peachtree Center Ave., NE, Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30303-1257

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No: II-11-047

CONTACT: Roger Hannah (404) 997-4417

Joey Ledford (404) 997-4416

August 18, 2011

E-mail: OPA2.Resource@nrc.gov

NRC ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER TO USEC'S PADUCAH GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Confirmatory Order to the United States Enrichment Corp.'s Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant, which has agreed to a series of corrective actions after an operator deliberately violated radiation protection procedures.

The order stems from an incident that occurred at the Paducah, Ky., facility on March 17, 2010. An operator was involved in a routine activity involving changing cylinders in the enrichment cascade building and became contaminated. The operator then deliberately failed to properly use the radiation monitor, bypassing it when leaving the contamination control zone and spreading contamination to an adjacent area.

The incident was quickly identified and investigated by USEC-Paducah management. No workers received any significant radiation exposure. The operator involved was disciplined and is no longer employed by USEC-Paducah.

The Confirmatory Order stems from a settlement reached under the NRC's Alternative Dispute Resolution process, which was initiated at the request of USEC-Paducah. Company officials acknowledged the incident was serious and implemented a series of corrective actions and enhancements to prevent recurrence.

The corrective actions agreed to by USEC include multiple staff briefings by management, procedural reviews and revisions, retraining and communication of lessons learned to staff. Additionally, USEC committed to enhancing new employee orientation and employee training to ensure staff clearly understands the consequences of deliberate non-compliance with procedures. USEC will also expand an ongoing Safety Conscious Work Environment assessment to include the safety culture components of decision making and work practices. As part of the agreement, the NRC will not issue a Notice of Violation in the matter and will not propose a civil penalty.

Copies of the Confirmatory Order will be posted on the [NRC website](http://www.nrc.gov).

###

News releases are available through a free [listserv subscription](#) or by clicking on the [EMAIL UPDATES](#) link on the NRC homepage (www.nrc.gov). E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's website.