

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Office of Public Affairs, Region II

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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$2,750 CIVIL PENALTY AGAINST WESTERN SOIL, INC. OF MAYAGUEZ, PUERTO RICO

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a civil penalty of \$2,750 against Western Soil, Inc., of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, for failure to limit access to or secure from unauthorized removal licensed radioactive material.

As a result, NRC officials said that on June 4 of this year, a soil moisture density gauge containing approximately 10 millicuries of Cesium-137 and 50 millicuries of Americium-241 was stolen from a company vehicle at a temporary job site in Aguada. Local police returned the device, used in construction to measure soil moisture and density, on June 7 with no apparent signs of tampering.

NRC officials held an open, predecisional enforcement conference with the company president in Ponce on November 9. NRC officials said the company is being fined for the violation but that it is being credited with prompt and comprehensive corrective actions in response to the violation and theft.

The company has 30 days from receipt of the Notice of Violation to either pay the civil penalty or to protest it.

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