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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$37,500 CIVIL PENALTY AGAINST FP&L FOR ALLEGED VIOLATION OF NRC REQUIREMENTS AT ST. LUCIE NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$37,500 civil penalty against Florida Power and Light Company for alleged violation of NRC requirements at the St. Lucie nuclear power plant near Ft. Pierce, Florida.

NRC officials said the action was being proposed because of a condition identified by the plant staff on April 26, 1991, which indicated that one of two containment spray systems in Unit 2 had been inoperable since about November 29, 1990, because of an error in positioning a valve. During that time period, the other containment spray system was unavailable or out of service for relatively short time periods. During a postulated accident, containment spray would be needed to reduce temperature and pressure inside the containment building.

The NRC said plant rules call for personnel to provide a weekly verification of the correct position of locked valves by unlocking them and physically verifying valve position manually in the closing direction. The valve in question is in a horizontal line about twelve feet above the floor a pipe tunnel and workers apparently relied upon visual verification by observing a broken position indicator which inaccurately indicated that the valve was open.

NRC officials said the company took prompt action to correct the situation when it was identified and has taken steps to assure that plant personnel properly perform these functions in the future.

The company has 30 days in which to pay the civil penalty or to protest it.

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