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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NRC PROPOSES \$205,000 FINE AGAINST CONSOLIDATED EDISON
FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS AT INDIAN POINT 2 NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has proposed a \$205,000 fine against Consolidated Edison Company of New York for seven alleged violations of agency guidelines at the utility's Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant.

Six of the infractions involve a failure to identify and/or correct problems at the plant between June 1995 and March of this year, resulting in conditions the NRC considers "adverse to quality." The seventh deals with inadequate fire protection measures.

Two other alleged violations at the Buchanan, N.Y., facility were cited by the NRC but are not the subject of fines. They pertain to inadequate written procedures and a failure to properly review a safety evaluation. One other alleged violation, involving the inadequate design of certain fire protection measures, was not cited due to identification and prompt corrective action by Consolidated Edison.

In the case of the unidentified/unresolved problems, one of the violations pertains to a malfunction of four feedwater regulating valves last January 27. The valves control the flow of water which absorbs heat from the reactor coolant system and produces steam.

Subsequent inspection determined the cause of the failures to be blasting grit that had been used to prepare the high-pressure turbine casing during the 1995 refueling outage. The coarse material had migrated to the valves and caused internal damage. Despite the fact that a June 1995 failure of a heater drain tank pump was recognized to have been caused by intrusion of the same grit, adequate corrective action measures were not taken to identify the root causes and extent of the problem, and to correct it in a timely manner.

A second violation involves Consolidated Edison's failure to identify the inadvertent actuation of multiple fire dampers in the control building from March 4 to 6, 1997, until it was

brought to management's attention by the NRC resident inspectors. This violation is considered significant due to the multiple missed opportunities to identify and address this problem.

Other corrective action violations were as follows:

- An auxiliary feedwater steam admission valve failed three consecutive quarterly tests, from April to October 1996, due to low discharge pressure. However, repairs were not made until an inspection of the valve's internals in December identified internal damage.

- The NRC found last July 12 that the plant's primary auxiliary building, containment purge and boric acid building charcoal filter deluge system had been inoperable for an undetermined period of time. Further, the control room annunciator alarm had been working intermittently since February 1996. Nevertheless, the alarm response procedure requiring control room operators to be dispatched to the system control panel to determine the causes of such problems was apparently not followed.

- Last July 31, a steam-driven auxiliary feedwater pump discharge flow control valve failed to open on demand during repeated testing and corrective actions to address the problem were not undertaken until subsequent disassembly of the valves revealed internal damage.

- Although an alternate safe shutdown power supply switch for a service water pump failed to close during multiple attempts during a surveillance test on December 3 -- and had previously experienced five similar failures during testing -- measures were not taken to prevent recurrences of these failures.

Regarding the fire protection violation, it was determined last July that protection features were not provided to limit fire damage and ensure that one of the multiple safety systems that can be used to achieve and maintain plant shutdown was available. Specifically, both the normal and alternate safe shutdown instrumentation could have been subject to fire damage and rendered inoperable.

Consolidated Edison has 30 days to pay the fine or request in writing that all or part be withdrawn.

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