



NRC NEWS

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NRC PROPOSES \$130,000 FINE TO ENTERGY NUCLEAR FOR MISSING DEADLINE TO HAVE NEW INDIAN POINT ALERT AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM IN OPERATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing a \$130,000 civil penalty to Entergy for its failure to meet an April 15th deadline – previously extended from Jan. 30, 2007 – to achieve operability of a new alert and notification system for the Indian Point nuclear power plant. Entergy operates the plant, which is located in Buchanan (Westchester County), N.Y.

“The NRC recognizes that the existing ENS (emergency notification system) is capable of alerting the general public in the vicinity of the Indian Point station if an emergency condition occurs,” NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins wrote to Entergy with regard to the enforcement action. “However, the failure to meet the terms of the order by the required due date, despite the additional time provided via our extension approval for you to ensure the system would be operable, is of significant regulatory concern to the NRC.”

Under the enforcement action, Entergy is also required to provide its action plan for resolution of the problems involving the new system. This plan, which must be submitted to the NRC within 30 days or prior to declaring the new alert and notification system operable, should include the following: details regarding siren sound volume test plans; system functionality and reliability test plans; and training plans and procedure enhancements to ensure, with a high degree of reliability, that the system’s sirens can be successfully activated from the counties that are part of the plant’s 10-mile-radius Emergency Planning Zone, including Westchester, Putnam, Rockland and Orange counties.

The NRC, as well as the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency, will continue to monitor Entergy’s progress, with the expectation that the new system will be placed into service in a timely fashion. The NRC notes that Entergy remains in non-compliance with the order until the new system, with back-up power capability, is operable within the context of the order requirements.

Like other U.S. commercial nuclear power plants, Indian Point is required to have an alert and notification system within the emergency planning zone around the facility. The system is designed to promptly notify the public should a serious incident occur at the plant so that citizens can listen to emergency broadcast stations for information and instructions.

As work continues on the new system, it is important to note that Indian Point’s existing alert and notification system remains in operation. The company is required to continue testing and maintaining the existing system.

In response to an NRC order issued in January 2006 that implements requirements in the Energy Policy

Act of 2005, Entergy is replacing its current emergency notification system with a new one that features, among other things, back-up power.

The order initially required Entergy to have the new system in operation by Jan. 30, 2007. However, the company was unable to meet that deadline and requested an extension to April 15. The NRC approved that request on Jan. 23. On April 13, Entergy requested a second extension, this time to Aug. 31, but the NRC rejected that request the same day after determining the company had not demonstrated “good cause” and that the factors and difficulties encountered in meeting the April 15th deadline were “reasonably within Entergy’s control.” The agency also said in its April 13th response to Entergy that it would consider taking enforcement action for violation of the order.

Entergy is required to respond to the enforcement action in writing within 30 days.

The NRC letter to the company regarding the enforcement action will be posted on this page: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/indian-point-issues.html> .

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