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NRC Issues Confirmatory Action Letter to Acuren USA; Will Conduct Additional Inspection

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Confirmatory Action Letter documenting actions that Acuren USA has agreed to take before resuming radiography operations at its facility in Kenai, Alaska. In addition, the NRC will conduct a follow-up inspection to learn more about a recent incident.

The letter formalizes commitments company officials made to the NRC after an unannounced inspection of Acuren's facility in Kenai on April 10. Inspectors walking around the outside of the facility observed high readings on their radiation survey meters in an area where there were no boundaries or physical controls to prevent entry by the public during radiography operations. The company is licensed to use radioactive materials in devices for making images of pipe welds.

An initial dose estimate performed by the inspectors suggests that had a member of the public been standing next to the building, they could have been exposed to radiation in excess of NRC annual limits (100 millirem) during the time the radiography operations were conducted on that day. In addition, the inspectors were concerned that over the course of a year, members of the public who may have worked in a nearby office had the potential to receive a dose in excess of NRC annual limits.

"We will be conducting a follow-up inspection to better understand the circumstances that contributed to this incident and to evaluate by direct observation the actions Acuren USA has taken to ensure public health and safety are adequately protected," said Region IV Administrator Marc Dapas.

The inspection team will develop a detailed chronology of the event, evaluate the adequacy of licensee actions in response to the incident, and assess the factors which may have contributed to the event. The team will prepare a written report that will be made publicly available.

Following a conversation with NRC officials, the company has agreed (1) not to resume radiography operations at its Kenai facility without NRC approval; (2) to provide the NRC with a description of planned actions taken to ensure that future activities will not result in any member of the public being exposed to radiation doses in excess of NRC limits at any of its facilities or temporary job sites; and (3) to provide the NRC with evaluations necessary to determine whether members of the public were exposed in excess of NRC dose limits during past activities.

Issuance of the Confirmatory Action Letter does not preclude the NRC from taking other additional actions for any violations of NRC requirements that may be identified.