NRC NEWS

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NRC INCREASES CIVIL MONETARY PENALTIES TO REFLECT INFLATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is increasing the civil penalties it can impose on licensees, effective Nov. 26, 2004. The maximum fine the NRC can impose per violation per day will be $130,000 for power reactors and gaseous diffusion plants, an increase of $10,000 over the previous maximum. An increase is mandated by Congress at least once every four years to account for inflation.

The penalties for other types of licensees are also being similarly adjusted. The maximum fine for test reactors, for instance, has been increased to $13,000 and the maximum fine for medical materials users is now $6,500.

The NRC is not required to issue fines at the maximum level and uses its discretion to determine an appropriate civil penalty on a case-by-case basis for violations identified through inspections and investigations. The last civil penalty increase enacted by the NRC was in November 2000.

In keeping with past practices, when the Commission initiates policy changes, the public can provide feedback; the deadline for comments is Dec. 27, 2004. Instructions on submitting comments are posted in the Oct. 26, 2004, *Federal Register* or can be found through the Enforcement Policy page of the NRC Web site, at http: //www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/enforcement/enforce-pol.html.

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