



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION I

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NRC TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATIONS WITH PA. CIVIL ENGINEERING FIRM

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of a Pennsylvania civil engineering firm on Thursday, February 8, to discuss apparent violations of agency requirements involving the use and control of gauges containing radioactive material.

The predecisional enforcement conference is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the NRC Region I office in King of Prussia, Pa. It will be open to the public.

Gilmore and Associates Inc., based in New Britain, Pa., owns six portable nuclear gauges. The devices contain cesium-137 and americium-241 and are used to measure the density and moisture content of soil and asphalt. The use of gauges is a small part of the company's business.

During an NRC safety inspection conducted on November 15 and 16 and December 19, seven apparent violations were identified, five of which were repeats of violations found during the previous inspection. The most significant apparent violation was a failure to control and maintain constant surveillance of a portable nuclear gauge, which resulted in severe damage to the device when it was run over by heavy construction equipment. Although the gauge was severely damaged, the nuclear materials remained intact and no radiation exposure to personnel occurred.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean the NRC has determined a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. Rather, the purpose is to discuss apparent violations, their causes and safety significance; to provide the licensee with an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report; and to enable the licensee to outline its proposed corrective action.

No decision on the apparent violations will be made at this conference. That decision will be made by NRC officials at a later time.

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