



NRC NEWS

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

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NRC TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATION AT WASHINGTON, D.C., HOSPITAL

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with representatives of a Washington, D.C., medical facility on Monday, March 5, to discuss an apparent violation of agency requirements involving the hospital's radiation oncology program.

The predecisional enforcement conference with George Washington University Hospital is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the NRC Region I office, 475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. The meeting will be open to the public.

Last July, the NRC conducted a safety inspection at the hospital, located on 23rd Street, N.W., to review a medical misadministration to one patient that occurred on June 15, 2000. During that event, a patient underwent a cancer treatment that utilized radioactive cesium-137 brachytherapy sources. However, because the sources being used shifted during treatment, the patient received a lesser dose than prescribed to the cancerous tissue and a higher dose than prescribed to surrounding tissues. A medical consultant contracted by the NRC to review the incident indicated the patient was experiencing medical complications that may be attributable to the misadministration.

Based on the inspection, the NRC has preliminarily determined that the hospital's quality management program failed to include a written procedure to meet the objective that each administration of nuclear medicine be in accordance with a written directive.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that the NRC has determined a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. Rather, the purpose is to discuss the apparent violation, its 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 violation will be made at this conference. That decision will be made by NRC officials at a later time.

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