

October 19, 2012
EN 12-047

OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT
NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Licensee: Energy Northwest
Columbia Generating Station
Docket No.: 50-397

EA-12-092

Subject: ISSUANCE OF FINAL SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION AND NOTICE OF VIOLATION

This is to inform the Commission of escalated enforcement actions that will be issued on or about October 24, 2012, to Energy Northwest (licensee) as a result of an inspection at Columbia Generating Station. The escalated enforcement actions consist of two White Significance Determination Process findings, both of which are associated with a violation, and a Severity Level III Notice of Violation. The White findings are issues of low to moderate safety significance and will require additional inspections. These violations were discovered during a baseline inspection involving the site dose assessment methods and emergency action levels.

The first White finding involved the licensee's failure to maintain a standard emergency action level scheme in accordance with 10 CFR 50.47(b)(4). An inaccurate calculation of Site Area Emergency and General Emergency effluent thresholds were incorporated into the licensee's emergency action level table. These errors affected the licensee's ability to properly classify an emergency event involving a radiological release.

The second White finding involved the licensee's failure to maintain adequate methods for assessing and monitoring actual or potential offsite consequences of a radiological emergency condition in accordance with 10 CFR 50.47(b)(9). A change to parameters used in offsite dose calculations for the reactor building effluent monitor resulted in inaccurate offsite dose calculations. This adversely affected the licensee's ability to assess the consequences of a radiological release and classification of emergencies using dose assessment results. It also had the potential to impact protective action recommendations necessary to protect public health and safety.

A Severity Level III Notice of Violation is being issued for violation of 10 CFR 50.72(b)(3)(xiii) which, in part, requires a licensee to notify the NRC as soon as practical and within eight hours of any event that results in a major loss of emergency assessment capability. Although the licensee identified longstanding inaccuracies in their dose projection system, they failed to recognize these inaccuracies as a major loss of emergency assessment capability and did not report the deficiencies in radiological assessment methods to the NRC within the allotted timeframe.

In response to the preliminary determination letter, the licensee attended a joint Regulatory Conference and Pre-decisional Enforcement Conference and presented its observations and prospective on the findings and violations. After reviewing the information developed during the inspection, and the information provided by the licensee, the staff concluded that the findings and violations are appropriately characterized as discussed above. The licensee has informed the NRC that multiple corrective actions are in place and/or planned.

It should be noted that the licensee has not been specifically informed of the enforcement actions. The schedule of issuance and notification is:

Mailing of Final Significance Determination	October 24, 2012
Telephone Notification of Licensee	October 24, 2012

The State of Washington will be notified.

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