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Region III Office of Public Affairs
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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$5,000 FINE AGAINST CLEVELAND CLINIC
FOR VIOLATIONS OF NRC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$5,000 fine against Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio, for deliberately failing to provide required radiation safety training for its employees and for failing to conduct an annual audit of the radiation safety program.

NRC is taking this action based on the findings of NRC's Office of Investigations (OI) and NRC inspectors. The investigation was conducted in May of this year based on information obtained during an NRC inspection in March.

Inspectors and investigators found that while both the Cleveland Clinic's former Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) and Radioisotope and Radiation Safety Committee (RRSC) knew that NRC required annual training of the clinic's radiation workers, such training had not been performed since 1993. Additionally, the RSO and clinic management knew that a radiation safety program audit was required annually, but did not perform an audit in 1995.

"These violations occurred because the resources available to the (clinic's) Director of Quality Management and the former RSO were not adequate, and the available resources were used to manage more pressing safety significant issues in your licensed program," said NRC Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach in his letter informing Cleveland Clinic Foundation of the proposed fine. "After the RSO brought the non-compliances and the resource issue to the attention of the RRSC, the violations continued with the knowledge of the full RRSC. Deliberate violations are of concern because the NRC's regulatory programs are based on licensees and their employees acting with integrity."

In response to NRC inspection findings, Cleveland Clinic in April conducted training sessions for its radiation workers and in July hired an independent contractor to perform the radiation safety program audit.

The March inspection also identified a violation involving securing radioactive materials from improper access. Due to extensive corrective actions taken by the clinic, no fine was proposed.

Cleveland Clinic has until January 19 to pay the fine or to protest it. If the fine is protested and subsequently imposed by the NRC staff, the company may request a hearing.

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