

March 20, 1997
EN 97-022

OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT
NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Licensee: Houston Lighting & Power Company (EA 96-500)
South Texas Project
Docket Nos. 50-498, 50-499

Subject: NOTICE OF VIOLATION AND PROPOSED EXERCISE OF ENFORCEMENT DISCRETION

This is to inform the Commission that the staff intends to exercise enforcement discretion per Section VII.B.6 of the Enforcement Policy and not propose a civil penalty for a cited Severity Level III violation. A letter forwarding the Notice of Violation will be issued on or about March 27, 1997. The violation was identified as a result of an inspection at the South Texas Project and consists of a violation associated with leakage from a valve in the safety injection system in Unit 2. The valve leakage, which was not fully evaluated nor promptly corrected, represented leakage external from primary containment that, in the event of a large-break loss of coolant accident, could have resulted in doses to control room personnel in excess of GDC 19 limits.

As a result of comprehensive corrective action (once the significance of the situation was understood) but no credit for identification, this case would normally have resulted in a base civil penalty being proposed because there were two escalated enforcement actions within the previous two years. The previous escalated actions, although issued in October 1995 and September 1996, occurred in 1992 and 1994, respectively, and are not considered indicative of the current performance at this facility. Therefore, based on the recent overall good performance at the South Texas Project, the NRC has determined that this case warrants the exercise of discretion and will not propose a civil penalty for this Severity Level III problem.

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

Mailing of Notice	March 27, 1997
Telephone Notification of Licensee	March 27, 1997

The State of Texas will be notified.

The licensee has thirty days from the date of the Notice in which to respond.

Contacts: D. Nelson, OE, 415-3280 J. Lieberman, OE, 415-2741

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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE UNTIL
VERIFICATION THAT LICENSEE HAS RECEIVED ACTION

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PDR I&E
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