



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

April 1, 1985

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The Honorable Edward Markey, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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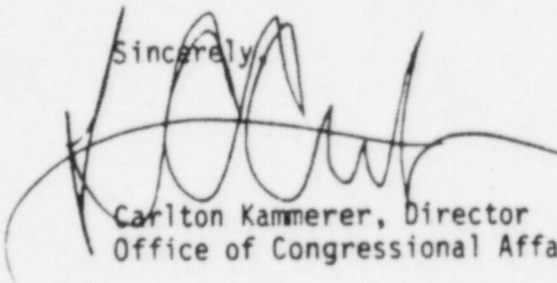
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Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed for your information is an announcement that the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited the Veterans Administration Medical Center of Washington, DC, for allegedly failing in six instances to comply with NRC requirements involving the radiation protection of workers and the public.

It is planned to mail this information to the news media today, April 1, 1985.

Sincerely,



Carlton Kammerer, Director  
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc: Rep. Carlos Moorhead

IDENTICAL LETTER SENT TO:  
Sen. Simpson/cc: Sen. Hart  
Rep. Udall/cc: Rep. Lujan

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# **UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20555**

No. 85-53  
Tel. 301/492-7715

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(Monday, April 1, 1985)

## **NRC STAFF ORDERS D.C. VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER TO HAVE OUTSIDE EXPERT ASSESS ITS RADIATION SAFETY PROGRAM**

The staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited the Veterans Administration Medical Center of Washington, D.C., for allegedly failing in six instances to comply with NRC requirements involving the radiation protection of workers and the public. The staff also has issued an order that modifies the Center's NRC license to require the Center to retain an independent expert to perform an assessment of its radiation safety program.

In a letter sent to the Center by James M. Taylor, Director of the NRC's Office of Inspection and Enforcement, Taylor said that the alleged violations "collectively represent a significant programmatic breakdown in management oversight and control of the radiation safety program. Individually, the violations demonstrate the need for improvement in the administration and control of the radiation safety program to assure adherence to NRC requirements and safe performance of licensed activities."

An NRC inspection conducted at the Medical Center on January 22, 1985, led to citations for improper disposal of radioactive materials to a landfill; inadequate security of licensed radioactive material; failure to perform adequate radiation surveys; failure to implement certain training requirements; inadequate control of radioactive materials received by the center; and failure to maintain the minimum number of required radiation survey instruments.

The order modifying the license also noted that, although the Medical Center's own Radiation Safety Committee had previously identified some of these alleged violations, the Center had not acted to correct the deficiencies.

The Center has been given 30 days to retain the services of a recognized expert, independent of the V.A., to perform an assessment of the radiation safety program and to submit his or her name and qualifications to the NRC Region I Regional Administrator, Dr. Thomas E. Murley.

The assessment is to be performed within 60 days of the date of the order and, within 90 days of the date of the order the independent expert's report is to be submitted to the Medical Center director, and a copy is to be sent to the NRC Regional Administrator.

Within 120 days of the order, the Center must submit to the Regional Administrator a report describing the methods for implementing the recommendations of the assessment report, or providing justification for alternative corrective action, if any specific recommendations are not adopted.

The Center, or anyone else whose interest is adversely affected by this order may, within 30 days, request a hearing.

In response to the Notice of Violation accompanying the order, the Center has 30 days to write to the Regional Administrator, admitting or denying the alleged violations; and, if admitted, the reasons for them; corrective steps that have been taken and results achieved; corrective steps taken to avoid further violations; and the date when full compliance will be achieved.

The District of Columbia government has been informed of this enforcement action.

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