

June 25, 1984

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The Honorable Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed for your information is an announcement that the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has cited the University of Pennsylvania for six alleged violations of NRC requirements for controlling the use of radioactive material.

It is planned to mail this information to the news media today, June 25, 1984.

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
Rep. Markey/cc: Rep. Marlenee
Sen. Heinz
Sen. Specter
Rep. Foglietta
Rep. Gray
Rep. Borski
Rep. Edgar
Rep. Coughlin

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SURNAME	COMB						
DATE	6/25/84						



UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION I
631 Park Avenue, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406
Tel. 215 337-8330

No.: I-84-69
Contact: Karl Abraham
Brian Norris

June 25, 1984

NRC STAFF CITES UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS INVOLVING THE CONTROL OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL; PROPOSES \$4,000 FINE

The staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has cited the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia for six alleged violations of NRC requirements for controlling the use of radioactive material. The staff proposes to fine the university \$4,000.

The University of Pennsylvania is licensed by the NRC to use radioactive material in medical research and in the diagnosis and treatment of patients in the Hospital of University of Pennsylvania (HUP).

One of these alleged violations involved the exposure of a University of Pennsylvania employee to radioactive material in excess of limits set by federal regulations. During a thirteen-week period ending on January 13, 1984, the employee was exposed to radioactive iodine-125 in quantities equivalent to 4.9 times the amount allowed per quarter-year by NRC regulations. The employee works as a researcher for the university. The level of exposure received by the employee is not believed to cause adverse health effects.

Other alleged violations involved failure to maintain control of radioactive material, failure to perform thyroid bioassays on employees using radioisotopes for research, failure by employees to routinely use syringe shields while preparing radiopharmaceuticals, failure to perform adequate surveys of air discharged from areas where iodine-125 was processed, and failure to limit radiation levels in an unrestricted area. The unrestricted area was a patient-care room in HUP's Maloney Building at 36th and Spruce Street next to the room where the radiopharmaceuticals were being administered to another patient.

While the radiation levels in the patient-care room were in excess of NRC requirements, an evaluation by the university demonstrated that no individual received a radiation dose in excess of 100 millirem, well within the NRC limit for an individual in an unrestricted area.

The alleged violations were examined during an NRC inspection conducted at the University of Pennsylvania January 13 and 16, and March 21 and 22, 1984. The inspection was made to review the circumstances of the employee exposure incident, which the university had reported to the NRC.

(more)

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In a letter informing the university of this enforcement action, Dr. Thomas E. Murley, Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, said, "these 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. We are especially concerned that the Radiation Safety Committee and the Radiation Safety Officer have not been effective in assuring licensed activities are properly conducted and appear to have accepted conditions which were not in strict accordance to NRC requirements."

The university has 30 days either to pay the fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn. The company also has 30 days to write to the NRC staff and describe what was done or will be done to assure that these alleged violations do not recur.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed of this proposed enforcement action.

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