



NRC NEWS

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NRC PROPOSES \$6,500 FINE FOR H&G INSPECTION CO. OF HOUSTON, TEXAS

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a fine of \$6,500 against H&G Inspection Co., of Houston, Texas, for violating NRC requirements.

In a May 1 letter to the company, Bruce S. Mallett, Administrator of the NRC's Region IV office in Arlington, Texas, said that as a result of an NRC inspection, the agency determined that the company violated NRC requirements for the possession and use of radioactive materials.

The violations involved failure to control and maintain constant surveillance of radioactive material in an unrestricted area; failure to have a second qualified individual observe radiographic operations; and willful failure to properly handle a radiographic device during transportation.

Radiography is a non-destructive testing method which uses a sealed radiation source to make x-ray like images of heavy metal objects like pumps, valves and pipes.

"The NRC acknowledges that there were no actual safety consequences as a result of these violations," Mallett said. "However," he added, "these violations are serious because we rely on the integrity of individuals performing licensed activities to ensure public health and safety."

NRC staff discussed the violations, their significance, the root cause and the company's corrective actions during an enforcement conference with H&G officials on April 13. The company has taken steps to prevent recurrence, which the NRC acknowledged in the May 1 letter.

The NRC has classified each violation at Severity Level III. One carries a \$6,500 civil penalty. The agency has a four-level severity scale in which Severity Level I is the most serious. The company has 30 days to either pay the proposed fine or challenge it.

The NRC's letter, its enclosures, and the company's response will be made available to interested members of the public through the agency's public electronic reading room at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in accessing these documents is available from the NRC Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209.

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