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\$2,500 FINE AGAINST ESCANABA, MICHIGAN, HOSPITAL FOR DELIBERATE VIOLATION OF NRC SAFETY RECORD REQUIREMENTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$2,500 fine against St. Francis Hospital, Escanaba, Michigan, for deliberate violations of NRC requirements for radiation safety tests and recordkeeping.

The fine is based on the findings of an NRC inspection which began on July 15 of last year. The inspection and a subsequent investigation by the NRC Office of Investigations determined that a hospital employee had deliberately generated documents that implied that daily tests and surveys had been performed.

The individual, however, told NRC personnel that he often found it expedient to fill out the required daily records during slow times and then perform the actual tests or surveys later.

The records were to document the results of daily radiation surveys in the nuclear medicine area of the hospital, a test of the device used to measure radioactive pharmaceuticals, and a test of the constituents of radioactive pharmaceuticals used at the hospital.

The recording of test results before the tests were actually performed did not appear to adversely impact the health of the patients. However, deliberate violations are of significant concern because the NRC's regulatory programs are based on a licensee and its employees acting with integrity.

A contributing factor to the violations was the hospital's failure to provide the employee with sufficient instruction and oversight to ensure that he understood why certain tests should be performed prior to administering doses of radioactive pharmaceuticals to patients.

Several additional violations were identified in the inspection, but no fine was proposed for these violations. A Notice of Violation, requiring adequate corrective action, was issued.

These additional violations included failure to measure the radiation level and check for radioactive contamination on a

package received at the hospital; failure to perform tests of the radiation dose calibrator and to measure the constituents of a radioactive pharmaceutical; and failure to provide annual refresher training.

The hospital has until June 13 to pay the fine or to protest it. If the fine is protested and subsequently imposed by the NRC staff, the hospital may request a hearing.

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