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NRC, ENTERGY TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATIONS
AT RIVER BEND NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a predecisional enforcement conference Monday, November 23, with officials of Entergy Operations, Inc., operators of the River Bend nuclear power plant near St. Francisville, Louisiana, to discuss four apparent violations of NRC requirements.

The conference will begin at 12:30 p.m. at NRC Region IV offices in Arlington, Texas. The meeting will be open to public observation; NRC officials will be available afterward for questions.

The apparent violations were identified during inspections held in June and August of this year. The principal issue of concern is a design problem with the control air system for the plant's emergency diesel generators. The control air system, which is required for the diesels to run, is not powered from an electrical source that is guaranteed to be available in an emergency situation in which offsite electrical power is lost. This problem, which has existed since initial operation, was discovered by River Bend personnel in 1989; however, acceptable interim corrective measures were apparently not completed until this year. Modifications to connect the diesel control air system to an emergency power supply are underway.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that NRC has made a final determination that violations did occur or that enforcement action, such as a monetary fine, will be taken. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the apparent violations, their causes and safety significance, and to provide Entergy officials with an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report and present corrective actions that have been taken.

No decision on the apparent violations or any contemplated enforcement action will be made at this conference. Those decisions will be made by senior NRC officials at a later time.

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