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NRC upgrades security at U.S. nuclear plants

February 27, 2002 Posted: 4:57 AM EST (0957 GMT)

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WASHINGTON (CNN) -- The Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued orders Tuesday to all 104 of the nation's nuclear power plants, upgrading the high-level security measures already in place.

"Some of the requirements formalize a series of security measures that NRC licensees had taken in response to advisories issued by the NRC in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks," the commission said.

"Additional security enhancements, which have emerged from the ongoing comprehensive security review, are also spelled out in the orders."

The agency provided few specifics, but new security requirements generally include:

- Increased patrols.
- Augmented security forces and capabilities.
- Additional security posts.
- Installation of additional physical barriers.
- Vehicle checks at greater standoff distances.
- Enhanced coordination with law enforcement and military authorities.
- More restrictive site access controls for all personnel.

The commission said the requirements will stay in effect until the threat level has diminished or until other security changes are needed following a comprehensive re-evaluation of safeguards and security programs.

Under the new orders, licensees are required to provide the NRC with a schedule for achieving full compliance within 20 days.

Licensees would also have the same time frame to notify the agency if they feel they are unable to comply with any of the requirements or if implementation of any requirement would adversely impact safe operation of the facility.

VIDEO

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced new security measures to shield nuclear power plants from terrorist attack. CNNfn's Steve Young reports (February 27)

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