

The Palm Beach Post

[Print this page](#) [Close](#)

Government fines FPL over Turkey Point safety issue

By **SUSAN SALISBURY**

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

Updated: 3:23 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, 2012

Posted: 12:12 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, 2012

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff said today it is citing Florida Power & Light Co. for failure to properly maintain its Turkey Point nuclear plant's onsite emergency response facility.

The Juno Beach-based company is also being fined \$140,000 for failure to report that the facility, known as its Technical Support Center was not fully functional for seven months during 2010 and 2011.

The violation is of low to moderate safety significance and may require additional NRC inspection and oversight, the NRC said.

The Turkey Point plant is about 25 miles south of Miami near Homestead.

NRC spokesman Roger Hannah said \$70,000 would be the lowest possible fine.

"They essentially got a double fine. They did not find it or report it," Hannah said.

NRC inspectors discovered the problem. The plant has had more than minor enforcement issues in the last two years, which allows the NRC to levy the fine, Hannah said.

FPL has 30 days to appeal the NRC staff's determination of a "white" finding, the civil penalty, or both.

FPL spokeswoman Bianca Cruz said the company is reviewing the finding and considering its options.

"It is of low to moderate safety significance. The building in question has nothing to do with day-to-day operations. At no point were the employees or the public's safety being compromised," Cruz said.

On Feb. 21 the NRC staff and FPL management discussed the problems connected to the during a two-hour meeting at the NRC's regional office in Atlanta. The TSC is designed to keep employees safe during an emergency.

On two different occasions, FPL failed to maintain a fully functional TSC because plant personnel disabled portions of its ventilation system and failed to implement appropriate compensatory measures.

At the meeting FPL officials maintained that the issue never presented a risk to the health and safety of its workers or the public, and said the ventilation system problems were corrected.

Tuesday the NRC said that under the conditions that existed at the TSC, response personnel may not have been protected from radiological hazards if an emergency had occurred.

NRC regulations require licensees to report a major loss of emergency assessment capability within eight hours. The utility's failure to report the inoperability of the emergency response facility is a violation of NRC requirements.

FPL has 30 days to appeal the NRC staff's determination of a "white" finding, the civil penalty, or both.

The NRC evaluates performance at nuclear power plants with a color-coded process that classifies regulatory findings as green, white, yellow or red, in order of increasing safety significance.

Find this article at:

[Print this page](#) [Close](#)

<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/money/government-fines-fpl-over-turkey-point-safety-issue-2294403.html>