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NRC ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER TO SPECIAL TESTING LABORATORIES,
ALLOWING RESUMPTION OF LICENSED ACTIVITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a confirmatory order to Special Testing Laboratories of Bethel, Conn., allowing the company to resume taking part in NRC licensed activities, as long as certain conditions are met.

The order, which confirms an agreement reached with the company, requires, in part, that: Richard C. Speciale replace Richard A. Speciale as the Special Testing Laboratories' Radiation Safety Officer. It also specifies that Richard A. Speciale will refrain from any involvement or influence in the conduct of NRC licensed activities, and that the company will notify the NRC if those conditions are not met. The order also requires the company to retain the services of an independent consultant to perform eight quarterly audits of the Special Testing Laboratories' radiation safety program, beginning 30 days from receipt of the order.

Special Testing Laboratories in Bethel, Conn., is authorized to possess and use portable nuclear gauges. An NRC order issued in December required the company to suspend all activities under its NRC license. That action stemmed from an inspection in the fall which determined that Richard A. Speciale had provided information to the NRC regarding the number of gauges being used as well as the number of users and their training, all of which he knew was not complete and accurate in all material respects. In addition, Mr. Speciale admitted that he had "never stopped using the nuclear gauges" after a license issued to another company, Testwell Craig Laboratories of Connecticut, Inc., (where he was also president) was suspended for nonpayment of fees.

In the confirmatory order, NRC Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Effectiveness, Malcolm R. Knapp, said, "implementation of the commitments will provide assurance that sufficient resources will be applied to the radiation safety program, and that the program will be conducted safely and in accordance with NRC requirements."

Issuance of this confirmatory order does not preclude the NRC from taking further enforcement action against the licensee and/or Richard A. Speciale as an individual, upon completion of the ongoing NRC investigation.

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