



This photo made available by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission shows a 10-gallon-per-minute leak which sprung Oct. 19, 2007, in rusted piping that carried essential service water at the Byron nuclear plant in Illinois. The water is needed to cool the reactor in an emergency. The plant was immediately taken offline for repairs. Federal regulators have been working closely with the nuclear power industry to keep the nation's aging reactors operating within safety standards by repeatedly weakening those standards, or simply failing to enforce them, an investigation by The Associated Press has found. Time after time, officials at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission have decided that original regulations were too strict, arguing that safety margins could be eased without peril, according to records and interviews. (AP Photo/Nuclear Regulatory Commission)

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