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April 13, 2000



Energy to Serve Your WorldSM

NEL-00-0100

Docket No.: 50-348

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, DC 20555-0001

**Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant
Unit 1 Licensee Event Report 2000-003-00
Penetration Room Filtration Automatic Start During Fuel Sipping**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant – Unit 1 Licensee Event Report (LER) No. 2000-003-00 is being submitted in accordance with 50.73(a)(2)(iv). There are no NRC commitments in the LER.

If you have any questions, please advise.

Respectfully submitted,


Dave Morey

EWC/maf ler200003-00.doc
Attachment

IE22

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U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Mr. L. M. Stinson, General Manager - Farley

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D. C.
Mr. L. M. Padovan, Licensing Project Manager – Farley

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region II
Mr. L. A. Reyes, Regional Administrator
Mr. T. P. Johnson, Senior Resident Inspector – Farley

Estimated burden per response to comply with this mandatory information request: 50 hrs. Reported lessons learned are incorporated into the licensing process and fed back to industry. Forward comments regarding burden estimate to the Records Management Branch (T-6 F33), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to the Paperwork Reduction Project (3150-0104), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. If an information collection does not display a currently valid OMB control number, the NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, the information collection.

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER)

(See reverse for required number of digits/characters for each block)

FACILITY NAME (1)

Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant - Unit 1

DOCKET NUMBER (2)

0 5 0 0 0 3 4 8

PAGE (3)

1 OF 4

TITLE (4)

Penetration Room Filtration Automatic Start During Fuel Sipping

EVENT DATE (5)			LER NUMBER (6)			REPORT DATE (7)			OTHER FACILITIES INVOLVED (8)	
MONTH	DAY	YEAR	YEAR	SEQUENTIAL NUMBER	REVISION NUMBER	MONTH	DAY	YEAR	FACILITY NAME	DOCKET NUMBER
03	15	2000	2000	003	00	04	13	2000		05000
									FACILITY NAME	05000
									FACILITY NAME	05000

OPERATING MODE (9)	POWER LEVEL (10)	THIS REPORT IS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF 10 CFR §: (Check one or more) (11)			
		20.2201(b)	20.2203(a)(2)(v)	50.73(a)(2)(f)	50.73(a)(2)(vii)
N	000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LICENSEE CONTACT FOR THIS LER (12)

NAME

L. M. Stinson, General Manager Nuclear Plant

TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)

334 - 899 - 5156

COMPLETE ONE LINE FOR EACH COMPONENT FAILURE DESCRIBED IN THIS REPORT (13)

CAUSE	SYSTEM	COMPONENT	MANUFACTURER	REPORTABLE TO EPIX	CAUSE	SYSTEM	COMPONENT	MANUFACTURER	REPORTABLE TO EPIX

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT EXPECTED (14)

YES (if yes, complete EXPECTED SUBMISSION DATE)

NO

EXPECTED SUBMISSION DATE (15)

MONTH DAY YEAR

ABSTRACT (Limit to 1400 spaces, i.e., approximately 15 single-space typewritten lines) (16)

On March 15, 2000 at 2051, with Unit 1 defueled, a valid high radiation alarm occurred on spent fuel pool (SFP) ventilation radiation monitor, R-25B. The alarm resulted in an automatic start of the B-train penetration room filtration system (PRF), an Engineered Safety Feature (ESF) actuation. It also resulted in an automatic shutdown of the normal SFP ventilation system. Per system design, the shutdown of the SFP ventilation system resulted in an automatic start of the A-train PRF system. The high alarm was caused by radioactive gases released from a fuel sipping activity being performed to identify leaking fuel assemblies. The PRF system functioned as designed and no abnormal offsite radioactive release was indicated.

The cause of this event was procedural inadequacy in that the procedure being used for the leak detection did not contain sufficient provisions needed to prevent the auto start of the PRF system during release of radioactive gases into the SFP area. Small releases of radioactive gas are expected when sipping a fuel assembly with leaking pins.

Appropriate plant procedures will be revised to require starting the PRF system before performing activities with the potential to release radioactive gases into the SFP area. The appropriate personnel will be trained on this event. These actions will be completed by June 30, 2000.

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER)
TEXT CONTINUATION

FACILITY NAME (1) Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant - Unit 1	DOCKET NUMBER (2) 0 5 0 0 0 3 4 8	LER NUMBER (6)			PAGE (3)		
		YEAR 2 0 0 0	SEQUENTIAL NUMBER - 0 0 3	REVISION NUMBER - 0 0	2	OF	4

TEXT (If more space is required, use additional copies of NRC Form 366A)(17)

Westinghouse -- Pressurized Water Reactor
Energy Industry Identification Codes are identified in the text as [XX].

Description of Event

On March 15, 2000 at 2051, with Unit 1 defueled, a valid high radiation alarm occurred on spent fuel pool (SFP) ventilation radiation monitor, R-25B [IL]. The high alarm was caused by radioactive gases released from a fuel sipping activity being performed to identify leaking fuel assemblies. The alarm resulted in an automatic start of the B-train penetration room filtration system (PRF) [VG], an Engineered Safety Feature (ESF) actuation. It also resulted in an automatic shutdown of the normal SFP ventilation system [VG]. Per system design, the shutdown of the SFP ventilation system resulted in an automatic start of the A-train PRF system.

Fuel sipping is performed in the SFP room and involves placing an assembly in the sipping canister that is then sealed from ambient SFP water. Air is injected into the canister to form an air pocket above the fuel assembly. A vacuum is drawn on the air pocket to reduce the pressure on the fuel rods and enhance migration of fission gasses into the air pocket. The air stream is sampled for radioactivity. The canister is then opened and the assembly is removed.

During the March 15, 2000 fuel sipping test, after identifying that the fuel assembly being tested had a leak, the test container was opened to remove the leaking fuel assembly per procedure. Shortly after the test container was opened, R-25B went into alarm followed by the automatic start of the B train of PRF and the subsequent start of A train PRF.

In response to the SFP radiation monitor R-25B high alarm, the fuel sipping evolution was stopped and personnel left the area. After radiation monitor indications had returned to normal, PRF was secured. A change to the vendor procedure to require both trains of PRF to be placed in operation and SFP ventilation system aligned to prevent a PRF automatic start signal was made and the fuel sipping evolution was resumed. The evolution was completed without further incident.

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER)
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TEXT (If more space is required, use additional copies of NRC Form 366A)(17)

Cause of Event

The cause of this event was procedural inadequacy in that the procedure being used for the leak detection did not contain sufficient provisions needed to prevent the auto start of the PRF system during release of radioactive gases into the SFP area. Small releases of radioactive gas are expected when sipping a fuel assembly with leaking pins.

Although the release of radioactive gases into the SFP area was expected and the potential for radiation monitors to alarm was communicated to the control room, the potential for the automatic start of the PRF was not recognized.

Safety Assessment

The SFP ventilation radiation monitor alarm setpoints were conservatively set one decade above background. The alarm for R-25B was set in the range of 714 to 1400 cpm while the Technical Specifications limit for the alarm is 300,000 cpm.

No plant gaseous effluent radiation monitor setpoints were reached. The plant vent stack radiation monitor R-14 readings remained normal. Therefore, the conditions leading to the SFP radiation monitor R-25B alarm and subsequent ESF actuation did not result in an abnormal radioactive release.

The health and safety of the public were unaffected by this event.

This event does not represent a Safety System Functional Failure.

Corrective Action

Appropriate plant procedures will be revised to require starting the PRF system before performing activities with the potential to release radioactive gases into the SFP area.

Appropriate personnel will be trained on this event.

These actions will be completed by June 30, 2000.

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER)
TEXT CONTINUATION

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		YEAR	SEQUENTIAL NUMBER	REVISION NUMBER		OF	
Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant - Unit 1	0 5 0 0 0 3 4 8	2 0 0 0	- 0 0 3	- 0 0	4	OF	4

TEXT (if more space is required, use additional copies of NRC Form 366A)(17)

Additional Information

A four-hour report was made in accordance with 50.72(b)(2)(ii) at 2138 on March 15, 2000.

The following LER(s) have been submitted in the past two years due to inadequate procedures causing Engineered Safety Feature actuation:

LER 98-005-00 (Unit 1) Auto Start of B Train of Penetration Room Filtration Due to Filling the Spent Fuel Transfer Canal.