

Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Worcester, Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 11, 1959

Mr. Harold L. Price, Director
Division of Licensing and Regulation
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Price:

I wish to thank you for your sending a copy of the Notice of Proposed Rule Making of the Atomic Energy Commission relating to reactor sites. The Proposed Rules do seriously effect our installation on the campus at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Basically, we have a low power training reactor (one kilowatt). Because of the low power, we are installing this in one of our buildings on the campus, which is quite suited to the purpose and which has reasonable safeguards as approved by the Atomic Energy Commission. However, as shown in the letter of Professor Wilbur, the proposed regulations apparently do not take into consideration the possibility of locating a low power reactor on the campus in proximity to other buildings.

I hope that this matter can be clarified since there are undoubtedly other installations of low-power critical and sub-critical reactors which have been approved by the AEC but which apparently do not fit the proposed revised rules.

Sincerely yours,



Arthur Bronwell
President

AB:esc
Enclosure

Copy to R. Lowenstein & PDR 6/19/59-Mmm

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Comments*

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JUN 8 - 1959

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

President's Office

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

June 5, 1959

To: Dean Price

From: Professor Wilbur

Re: AEC Proposed Rules Dated May 26, 1959

Paragraphs a, d, e, f and g are all acceptable and do not represent any change that I can detect from current philosophy. These paragraphs are rather general in specifications and allow the AEC licensing group reasonable leeway in evaluating a particular site.

I object to the wording of paragraphs "b" and "c". The statement that any power reactor, regardless of size will "usually" require a one-quarter mile exclusion radius is much too specific and restrictive and fails to take into consideration the extra safeguards and very low power usually associated with university training reactors. Although this paragraph and the next, which is similar, might not be abused by the AEC, they could lead to adoption of state and local codes which would impose a real hardship, particularly to owners of training reactors. Such regulations would also cast a reflection on the safety of existing reactors. Public opinion is already quite sensitive on the subject of reactor safety, largely because of misinformation, and regulating agencies need to take particular pains not to cause unwarranted anxiety.

I recommend that W.P.I. write a formal reply to this proposal objecting to paragraphs "b" and "c".

L. C. Wilbur

LCW:G

L. C. Wilbur

JUN 8 1959