

August 5, 2002

The Honorable Sandra R. Galef
New York State Assembly
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Ms. Galef:

I am responding to your letter of July 1, 2002, to the Chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), in which you again asked that the NRC require Entergy Nuclear Northeast to strengthen the spent fuel storage buildings at the Indian Point Energy Center. You forwarded more petitions from residents in your assembly district (adding to the petitions sent with your May 7, 2002, letter), and you stated that you and these residents strongly believe that spent fuel storage buildings should be stronger and better equipped to ensure the public's protection and safety.

In his July 12, 2002, response to your May 7 letter, Chairman Meserve stated that the NRC staff believes that spent fuel can be safely stored at Indian Point. Although the spent fuel storage buildings at Indian Point are not as hardened as the reactor containment structures, the robust design, small size of the pools, and site-specific arrangements and characteristics minimize the likelihood that a terrorist attack would cause enough damage to release radioactive material off site. In addition, onsite security measures have been enhanced.

As Chairman Meserve mentioned, the staff is reevaluating the NRC's safeguards and physical security programs. After this evaluation is completed, the Commission will be able to determine whether modifications to the spent fuel pool structures and enclosures are warranted and whether additional safeguards measures should be established.

I assure you that the NRC will continue to put the safety of the public first in these uncertain times. Thank you for your continued interest in the safety and security of the Indian Point Energy Center.

Sincerely,

/RA/

John A. Zwolinski, Director
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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