

Prep Files



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Washington, D.C. 20472

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Health Physics Section  
Operator Licensing, Human Performance, and  
Plant Support Branch  
Division of Inspection Program Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Ms. Gibson:

I am responding to your letter dated December 18, 2000, concerning the adequacy of public education and information measures for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), located in the State of California.

Public education and information are addressed under NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1, Rev.1, Planning Standard G, which requires (1) information to be made available to the public on a periodic basis as to how they will be notified of an emergency and what their initial actions should be, (2) advance establishment of the principal points of contact with the news media, and (3) establishment of procedures for the coordinated dissemination of information to the public. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's primary objective in evaluating compliance with Planning Standard G is to ensure that the right information reaches the appropriate people and that they understand the information. Thus, the means for disseminating public information materials is flexible as long as the desired result is obtained.

The concern is that since not everyone is a subscriber to Pacific Bell and close to 50 percent of the phone numbers are unlisted, public education and information about what to do in the event of an emergency at the SONGS are not reaching everyone in the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ). The letter further states that, with the use of the Internet and cellular phones, members of the public may not receive any phone directory or there may be other providers of communications services whose directories or books do not contain emergency planning information for the SONGS facility.

Enclosure

Although there are directory services other than Pacific Bell available to those located within the SONGS 10-mile EPZ, the Pacific Bell telephone book containing the emergency planning information is distributed to every address--commercial and residential--within Orange and San Diego Counties. This distribution includes addresses without a Pacific Bell customer or where the phone number is unlisted. The only exception to this distribution occurs when a customer specifically asks to be removed from the Pacific Bell distribution list.

In addition, in preparation for the annual siren test, an annual mailer is distributed--independent of the telephone book distribution--to everyone within the 10-mile EPZ. In accordance with Planning Standard G, the mailer provides the principal points of contact with the news media for dissemination of information during an emergency and reminds residents that emergency instructions are contained in the Pacific Bell telephone book.

The allegation further states that a survey of people in San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano found that over 50 percent of those surveyed had never heard of SONGS and that they associated San Onofre with surfing, rather than a nuclear power plant. These survey results are troubling and indicate that current public education and outreach efforts are not as effective as they should be. We recommend that the licensee take actions to improve on this facet of its activities.

It is my opinion that the public education and information dissemination measures currently in place for SONGS as described above meet the requirements of Planning Standard G. However, the poor survey results do indicate a weakness in the effectiveness of the program that needs to be investigated further. As stated above, we recommend that the licensee initiate actions to follow up on these survey results to improve the effectiveness of the public information efforts. If you have any further questions regarding this issue, please feel free to contact me at (202) 646-3030.

Sincerely,



W. Craig Conklin  
Director  
Technological Services Division