

8 July 2004

Sandra Zimmerman
87 Illinois Avenue
Waretown, NJ 08758

Dear Ms. Zimmerman:

I am responding to two questions you raised at the public meeting with the NRC on April 15, 2004, conducted following the meeting between AmerGen Energy Company and the NRC on the Annual Assessment of the performance of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station. I apologize for not getting back to you earlier -- Up until recently, our emergency preparedness staff has been devoted to other urgent tasks. During the April 15 public meeting, you had questions regarding the evacuation plans for school children from Frederick A. Priff (FAP) elementary school in Waretown to a host school (i.e., Stockton State College), and an apparent cancer cluster on 6th Street and Pebble Beach in Waretown as well as a rare blood disorder (i.e., AAS) in that same area.

Regarding your question on the evacuation plans for the FAP elementary school in Waretown, we have provided as Enclosure 1 the relevant segment of the Ocean County Emergency Response Plan, Revision 10, dated July 2003. Attachment five (5) details the busing needs to support evacuation of the school children in the FAP elementary school, located in Ocean Township. As detailed in that attachment, using seven (7) buses provided by Southern Regional, the FAP elementary school students will be evacuated to the Stockton State College via the Garden State Parkway. While at the host facility at Stockton State College, your children will be supervised by adults and cared for until your arrival.

You should have been notified by the administration of FAP of these plans by a letter similar to the one shown in Attachment one (1) of this response plan; we urge you to review this letter and retain it for future reference. Further, in the event of such an evacuation, you will be instructed exactly when and where to pick up your children via an Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) message similar to the message listed in Attachment 3 of the response plan. These EBS messages will be made on your local TV and radio stations in the event of an actual emergency.

Regarding the apparent cancer cluster on 6th Street and Pebble Beach in Waretown as well as a rare blood disorder (i.e., AAS) in that area, we have provided as Enclosures 2-5 information on studies regarding cancer risks and cancer clusters, as well as background information on such risks and potential clusters. Epidemiological studies conducted to determine if a cluster exists typically involve large populations and are not specific to the small local area you noted. We are unaware of any detailed study of this neighborhood in Waretown. However, the population in Ocean County, NJ was studied as part of the study conducted by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at the request of Congress. This study examined cancer mortality rates around 52 nuclear power plants, including Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station, nine Department of Energy facilities, and one former commercial fuel reprocessing facility. The NCI study concluded "from the evidence available, this study has found no suggestion that nuclear facilities may be linked causally with excess deaths from leukemia or from other cancers in

populations living nearby." ("Cancer in Populations Living Near Nuclear Facilities," National Cancer Institute NIH publication number 90-874, U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health)

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), "Ionizing radiation emissions from nuclear facilities are closely controlled and involve negligible levels of exposure for communities near such plants. Although reports about cancer case clusters in such communities have raised public concern, studies show that clusters do not occur more often near nuclear plants than they do by chance elsewhere in the population." We urge you to check out the ACS website at: http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_1_3X_Unproven_Risks.asp. Further, we noted that Oyster Creek operates within very stringent NRC limits regarding radioactive releases to the environment. The routine radioactive releases from Oyster Creek are typically a very small fraction of these NRC limits.

I trust this information is responsive to your concerns and again apologize for the delay in gathering the information promised. If you have any further questions in this matter, please contact me at (610) 337-5234.

Sincerely,

/RA by Richard S. Barkley Acting For/

Peter W. Eselgroth, Chief
Division of Reactor Projects Branch 7

Enclosures: 1) Element C, "Ocean County Office of Education, Emergency Response Plan, Revision 10, dated July 2003
2) Fact Sheet: Inquiries about Cancer in Communities
3) The Environmental Literacy Council - Cancer Cluster
4) Cancer Facts
5) Cancer Clusters: Findings Vs. Feelings

Ltr to Ms. Zimmerman

bcc: Patricia Milligan, NRR
Robert Summers, SRI - Oyster Creek

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