



REACTOR FACILITY

January 24, 2005

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Dan Hughes
Mail Stop O12-G13
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Mr. Hughes,

This letter will cover two apparent violations of Technical Specifications during the past few weeks.

1. The Reed Research Reactor Technical Specifications require that we check the alarm setpoints on our Continuous Air Monitor (CAM) and our Radiation Area Monitor (RAM) at least weekly. The Tech Specs also require that we check the conductivity of our reactor pool water at least weekly. During winter break, the operator scheduled to do this for the two weeks that the college was closed forgot to do it the second week. He got confused, thinking that he had done it the second week but he was remembering doing it the first week. Unfortunately, this person is the reactor supervisor, who would normally double check that it had been done. We normally do this weekly check on Wednesday, so the scheduled dates were December 23 and 30, 2004. The December 30 weekly was missed.

When the staff returned January 3, 2005, they found the error and immediately performed the weekly checks. The required checks were completed 12 days after the last check. Tech Specs only allows ten days between checks. The reactor was not operated during the period that it was overdue.

The supervisor was counseled on the importance of meeting Tech Spec required checks.

In the future, when the supervisor is scheduled to perform a checklist, another member of the supervisory staff will be assigned to double check that it is accomplished.

2. The Reed Research Reactor Technical Specifications require the linear channel scram to be operable when the reactor is not shutdown. When physically removing the regulating control rod for annual maintenance on January 11, 2005, the console linear channel was discovered to be off. Upon discovery, the linear channel was turned on.

The linear scram had been tested that morning as part of the Startup Checklist. Somehow the switch for the linear channel was turned off during a 30-minute period between that checklist and physically removing the control rod. The switch is located inside the console and not easy to hit accidentally, even though the back cover of the console had been removed for the maintenance. It is unknown how the switch was turned off.

It can be argued that this is not a violation of Tech Specs since when the linear channel is turned off its scrams are automatically actuated. Therefore the scram was actuated even though the instrument was turned off. Tech Specs require a scram, not indication.

In the future we will make an effort to keep the back cover of the console in place except when maintenance is actually in progress.

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Please contact me with any questions.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on January 24, 2005.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen G. Frantz", is written over the printed name.

Stephen G. Frantz

Reactor Director

c: Craig Bassett
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