

From: Neil Sheehan *NS*
To: Cliff Anderson; David McIntyre; David Pelton; Donald Florek; Eliot Brenner; Elizabeth Hayden; Scott Burnell; Sue Gagner
Date: 4/29/04 5:10PM
Subject: VY press release on pool search

C-12

From: "Williams, Rob" <rwill23@entergy.com>
To: "AP-Montpelier - Allen, Anne" <aallen@ap.org>, "AP-Montpelier - Graf, Chris" <cgraf@ap.org>, "AP-Montpelier - Ring, Wilson" <wring@ap.org>, "AP-Montpelier- Gram, Dave" <dgram@ap.org>, "AP-Montpelier- Lisa Rathke" <lrathke@ap.org>, <news@reformer.com>, "AP-Montpelier- Sneyd, Ross" <rsneyd@ap.org>, <metro@bfp.burlingtonfreepress.com>, <nremson@bfp.burlingtonfreepress.com>, <scostel@cvps.com>, <NREMSEN@burlingt.gannett.com>, <schnure@greenmountainpower.biz>, <news@recorder.com>, <rdavis@recorder.com>, <news@keenesentinel.com>, <ecohen@keenesentinel.com>, <smallheer@sover.net>, <susan.smallheer@rutlandherald.com>, "Union Leader" <TheUL@aol.com>, <news@vpr.net>, <bkinzel@vpr.net>, <jdillon@vpr.net>, <mail@wamc.org>, "WCAX - TV Newsroom" <news@wcax.com>, <bob@wfcv.org>, <info@whai.com>, <pscheuring@monadnockradiogroup.com>, <wkvtnews@together.net>, <breakingnews@thewmurchannel.com>, <jcoakley@hearst.com>, <jsefkind@hearst.com>, <wtsa@adelphia.net>
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VY news release

Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee

185 Old Ferry Road

Brattleboro, Vt 05301

News

Release

Date:

April 29, 2004

Contact:

Rob Williams
(802) 258-4181
rwill23@entergy.com

Garrett Calantropio of Vernon, an electronics technician with ROV Technologies, holds the remote-controlled underwater crawling device that is being used to search the Vermont Yankee spent fuel pool floor space for spent fuel rod segments.

Remote-Controlled Camera Begins Work in Vermont Yankee Fuel Pool

BRATTLEBORO, VT -- On Thursday morning, technicians at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant in Vernon lowered a self-propelled remote control camera into the plant's spent fuel pool and began traversing the pool floor as part of an on-going investigation to locate two segments of spent fuel rods that are unaccounted for.

Technicians from ROV Technologies, Inc. of Vernon, under the supervision of Entergy Vermont Yankee, are maneuvering the three-inch high motorized crawling device in the space under the spent fuel storage racks. The crawling device is equipped with forward and reverse facing cameras and lights as well as a mechanical gripper mounted on an articulated arm. High resolution video data from the cameras is being analyzed by plant engineers and by state and federal regulators.

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Entergy News Release

April 29, 2004

Page 2.

The two segments of spent fuel are about the diameter of a pencil and are seven and 17- inches long respectively. According to plant documentation, shortly after their removal from the reactor in 1979, the highly radioactive rods were placed in a special stainless steel container in the spent fuel pool. However, a recent in-depth examination of the contents determined the rod segments were not in their documented location.

"We take this investigation very seriously," said John Hoffman, Entergy's Special Nuclear Materials Task Team Manager. "We have brought together the necessary resources and technical expertise to conduct a thorough investigation. Our goal with the camera work is to find the segments in the pool or to eliminate the pool as a possible location."

Vermont Yankee's investigation also includes a thorough review of shipping and storage records as far back as 1979 when the fuel segments were originally removed from the reactor. The record review will address the possibility that the segments were shipped in shielded containers to other facilities licensed to handle radioactive waste.

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