

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 10/31/05 EDO CONTROL: G20050714
DOC DT: 10/18/05
FINAL REPLY:

Representative March Kaptur

TO:

Chairman Diaz

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** PRI ** CRC NO: 05-0511

Chairman Diaz

DESC:

Radioactive Contamination On and Off the NASA
Plum Brook Test Reactor

ROUTING:

Reyes
Virgilio
Kane
Silber
Dean
Cyr/Burns
Strosnider, NMSS
Caldwell, RIII
Collins, RI
Schmidt, OCA

DATE: 10/19/05

ASSIGNED TO: CONTACT:

NRR

Dyer

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Staff should be focus on the 10/31 and 11/4/05
proposed meeting dates.

Template: SECY-017

E-RIDS: SECY-01

MARCY KAPTUR
MEMBER
9TH DISTRICT, OHIO

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FDA AND RELATED AGENCIES
DEFENSE



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10/18/2005

The Honorable Michael Griffin
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
300 E St SW
Washington, DC 20546-0005

The Honorable Nils J. Diaz
Chair of Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North Building
11545 Rockville Pike, 17d1
Rockville MD 20852-2738

Dear Administrator Griffin and Chairman Diaz:

I am writing to request your attendance at a community meeting in my Congressional District to discuss the recent discovery of radioactive contamination on and off the NASA Plum Brook test reactor site in Sandusky, OH and reassure the public that all steps are being taken to ensure public safety.

I am seeking your guidance on how we can proceed and better educate the community on key components of the situation. Specifically, this would entail an examination of how the contaminants escaped the nuclear test facility in the first place, what steps are being taken to comprehensively assess the extent of contamination and what course of action is necessary to immediately remediate the contaminated land. I believe it is essential that the public view NASA and the NRC as engaged partners throughout this process.

While it is relieving to hear that initial reports indicate the levels of contamination are low and do not currently pose an immediate health risk, Plum Brook does travel through farmland and low-density housing on its way to Lake Erie. It is located just four miles from the City of Sandusky – home to nearly 30,000 people and the regions largest tourist attraction, Cedar Point Amusement Park.

We all look to your agencies to provide technical guidance and expertise in nuclear issues. As such, I believe an immediate public discussion with you and your staffs will ensure to the public that the proper course of action is being taken. As you know, our region is no stranger to safety and environmental concerns over nuclear issues. The recent meltdown threat at Davis-Besse Nuclear Reactor was ranked as one of the most serious

nuclear threats in U.S. history. News of radioactive contamination spreading off-site will be troubling to many, and it is paramount that we keep the public educated throughout this process.

I look forward to your prompt response. As Federal officials, it is critical that we move quickly to reassure the public that a plan is in place. I would propose that this meeting occur on any of the following dates: October 21st, October 31st or November 4th of this year. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly or Richard Shordt on my legislative staff regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcy Kaptur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

MARCY KAPTUR
U.S. Representative



Congresswoman
Marcy Kaptur

Serving Ohio's Ninth District
U.S. House of Representatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 2005

CONTACT: Elizabeth Ferranti 202-225-4146

Kaptur Announces NASA Will Inform Public of Radioactive Contamination from Plum Brook Test Reactor

WASHINGTON, DC -- This morning, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-9) announces that she has been notified by NASA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that NASA intends to inform the media this evening that low levels of radioactive contamination have been found on and off the Plum Brook Test Reactor site near Sandusky.

"It is my understanding NASA will report that, during soil testing, low levels of cobalt-60 and cesium-137 were discovered in a drainage ditch that leads off site and in Plum Brook, approximately one mile downstream toward Lake Erie," said Kaptur. "Although the isotopes found do not occur naturally and the radiation levels exceed recommended levels by the NRC, NASA and NRC officials indicate that they 'do not pose an immediate health risk.'"

NASA intends to release this information to the media tonight at either its Quarterly Community Work Group or its annual Community Information Session (CIS) – both at the BGSU Firelands Cedar Point Center in Huron. These are regularly scheduled meetings to discuss the ongoing decommissioning of the closed reactor facility on Plum Brook land. NASA and NRC officials indicate that the radioactive materials are the likely result of reactor operations which ended in 1973, and not a result of the ongoing clean-up.

Concern over the apparent contamination leading in the direction of Lake Erie has prompted Kaptur to seek further guidance from NASA and NRC officials on how to proceed. Kaptur has sent a letter inviting NASA Administrator Michael Griffin and NRC Chairman Nils J. Diaz to a public meeting in Sandusky as early as Friday in an effort to better advise the community as to the extent of the contamination, plans for immediate remediation, and any health or environmental concerns that might exist.

"We are in regular conversations with the NRC and NASA to assure that those agencies fully inform the public, be available to answer questions regarding Plum Brook, and work with elected officials across the region to address any remediation that must occur," said Kaptur.

The Quarterly Community Work Group and Annual Community Information Session will take place tonight, Tuesday, October 18 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the BGSU Firelands Cedar Point Center, located at One University Drive in Huron.

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