

From: Glenn Meyer *GM*
To: A. Randolph Blough; Brian Holian; Cornelius Holden; David Vito; Diane Screnci; James Clifford; John Boska; John Jolicoeur; John White; Robert Fretz; Scott Barber; Thomas Madden; Tracy Walker; Wayne Lanning
Date: 10/21/03 9:35AM
Subject: Fwd: Previous Carper Answers on Salem Tritium Issue

Bob Fretz's attached file has answers to Sen. Carper in February. The two questions related to:

1. Timeliness of public notification on tritium leak
2. Responsibility of licensee to find the problem and address it.

CC: Daniel Orr; Mel Gray; Theodore Wingfield

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From: Robert Fretz *RF*
To: Meyer, Glenn
Date: 10/21/03 6:30AM
Subject: What We Said Last Time Re: Salem Tritium Issue

Glenn,

Attached is the letter sent to Sen. Voinovich that addressed Sen. Carper's two questions on the Salem tritium issue (pages 2-52). Below are excerpts of our answers:

Bob

Answer to Question 1:

On September 18, 2002, Public Service Electric and Gas (PSEG) identified contaminated water leakage into the Unit 1 Auxiliary Building and initiated an investigation. On November 20, 2002, PSEG informed the Salem NRC resident inspectors that the identified water leakage into the Unit 1 auxiliary building appeared, based on chemical and radiological analyses, to be similar to Unit 1 spent fuel pool water. Earlier, on October 1, PSEG had mentioned leakage evaluations to the Headquarters Project Manager as part of discussions on outage activities, and that the September 18 problem identification document was within the PSEG corrective action system.

When notified, the NRC resident inspectors initiated a review of PSEG's actions and evaluations regarding the characterization of the leak. Senior regional specialists were sent to the site in early December 2002, to provide additional expertise in evaluating PSEG's actions relative to characterization of this leakage and its potential impact on workers, the public, and the environment. NRC resident and regional specialist oversight continued over the next several months through direct inspection by resident staff, as well as periodic visits and discussions by the regional specialists with PSEG and State of New Jersey representatives. No immediate health or safety concerns were identified for workers, the public, or the environment.

On February 6, 2003, the initial inspection activities were documented on pages 25-26 of the enclosed quarterly resident inspection report (50-272/02-09) for the period ending December 28, 2002. Also, on February 6, 2003, PSEG formally reported to the State of New Jersey its identification of tritium in two onsite wells near the facility. This identification was the first discovery of tritium, external to plant structures, above the State's reporting requirement of 1000 pCi/l. Consistent with NRC regulations outlined in 10 CFR 50.72, on that same day, PSEG reported to the NRC, in an Event Notification (39566) (enclosed) that it had formally notified the State of New Jersey regarding "a spill of radioactive material, specifically, tritium."

Answer to Question 2:

The licensee has the responsibility to identify and correct problems at its facilities. Licensees are required to have a problem identification and resolution program that provides for: 1) identification of problems; 2) reporting of problems in accordance with established criteria (e.g., NRC, State, and/or internal); 3) implementation of mitigating actions as necessary; 4) evaluation of any consequences of the problem (e.g., effect on workers, public, or the environment); 5) evaluation and determination of causes; 6) determination of risk significance; and 7) implementation of corrective actions commensurate with that risk significance. The basic requirements for these activities are outlined in 10 CFR 50, Appendix B. Specifically in this case, when the problem was identified, the licensee documented it in its corrective action program, initiated a review of the issue consistent with its understanding of the safety significance of the problem, implemented various mitigation activities to reduce or eliminate potential effects, and reported the issue to the State and the NRC when reporting criteria were met.

PSEG has taken actions to identify the source and extent of the leakage, including the drilling of a number of sample wells and evaluating sample data. PSEG has also taken action to collect any further leakage and is directing it into plant waste systems. The licensee is closely monitoring the issue consistent with its corrective action program, and is also undertaking a number of activities associated with identifying permanent repair options to the spent fuel pool. The NRC will continue to evaluate PSEG's activities regarding the root cause for the leak and corrective actions. Further, the NRC has maintained close coordination with the State of New Jersey and will continue to interact frequently with appropriate State officials.

CC: Barber, Scott