

Letter to the Editor:
Toledo Blade

Dear Editor:

Despite news reports to the contrary, FirstEnergy continues to accept full responsibility for the reactor head damage that was found in 2002 at our Davis-Besse nuclear plant. Further, I want to assure you that we remain fully committed to, and focused on, the plant's safe, reliable operation.

Our subsidiary, FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC), admitted wrongdoing to the Department of Justice and to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). We have not retreated from those admissions or the commitments we made to the NRC prior to the restart of the plant.

To address the vessel-head problem, FENOC implemented comprehensive corrective actions and made sweeping changes in management throughout the organization – and we continue to maintain an unwavering commitment to plant and community safety.

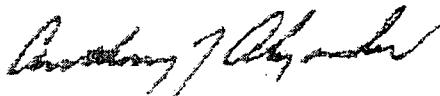
These and other efforts are reflected in the plant's safety and operational performance. For example, since returning to service, Davis-Besse employees have worked millions of hours without a lost-time accident while keeping a strong focus on nuclear safety.

~~In 2003,~~ we filed an insurance claim for damages at the plant – much like any other property owner would file a claim for damages from an accident, ~~even if at fault.~~ The claim was denied, and as part of the subsequent arbitration process, we provided independent reports to our insurance carrier.

We enlisted the services of a metallurgical firm, whose analysis and report offered a shorter timeline for the development of the reactor head cavity. We also retained an independent nuclear consultant to review related plant programs and provide an historical perspective on the event. And, we don't believe that their conclusions impact the effectiveness of current inspection requirements for reactor heads or nuclear safety. ~~These reports were not intended to imply that we do not accept responsibility, but rather to show compliance with policy terms that we did not purposely cause the insured loss.~~

~~We continue to accept full responsibility for our actions and omissions at Davis-Besse.~~ In fact, we could have repaired the cracks in the control drive nozzles long before we did.

We will fully cooperate with the NRC in addressing any questions regarding this issue, and will continue to rebuild the trust and goodwill we have established since the restart of Davis-Besse three years ago. Throughout this effort, we remain committed to the safe and reliable operation of our nuclear fleet.



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