

In-scope

June 13, 2006

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-III-06-015

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region III staff on this date.

Facility

Braidwood 1 and 2  
Exelon Generation Co.  
Braceville, Illinois  
Docket: 50-456 and 50-457  
License: NPF-72; NPF-77

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event  
 Alert  
 Site Area Emergency  
 General Emergency  
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: TRITIUM CONTAMINATION ISSUES

DESCRIPTION:

Note: This preliminary notification provides additional information on tritium contamination issues which were previously documented in PNO-III-05-016 and four updates to that preliminary notification.

Updated information:

On June 11, 2006, the licensee began pumping low level tritium contaminated water from a recently purchased offsite pond and returning it through the blowdown line to the Kankakee River. This process is a part of the licensee's Tritium Remediation Plan.

Reducing the level of water in the pond will reduce the tritium contamination of groundwater in the surrounding area. The water will be pumped into the circulating water discharge line for discharge to the Kankakee River, which will provide significant dilution to the low levels of contamination in the pond. The discharge line is the normal path for liquid radioactive effluents from the plant, under the NRC license and Illinois EPA discharge permit.

The licensee will continue to pump water from the pond to maintain a level about 5 to 7 feet below its current level, which is expected to draw additional contaminated groundwater into the pond for removal and reduce the impact of this contamination on the environment.

On May 24, 2006, the licensee received an Agreed Preliminary Injunction Order from the State of Illinois and Will County which gave the utility permission to move forward with these remediation efforts.

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Resident and regional NRC inspectors provided oversight of the licensee's preparations for and implementation of the pumping activities. Their actions included inspecting vacuum breaker vaults, monitoring pond pumping activities, verifying proper operation of the vacuum breaker vault leak detection system, and sampling of the water being removed from the pond.