

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 02/14/11

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FINAL REPLY:

Thomas Saporito
Jupiter, Florida

TO:

Vietti-Cook, SECY

FOR SIGNATURE OF :

** GRN **

CRC NO:

Leeds, NRR

DESC:

2.206 - Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
(EDATS: OEDO-2011-0058)

ROUTING:

Borchardt
Weber
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Muessle
OGC/GC
Dean, RI
Burns, OGC
Mensah, NRR
Scott, OGC
Kotzalas, OEDO

DATE: 01/18/11

ASSIGNED TO:

NRR

CONTACT:

Leeds

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Ref. G20100098.

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Other Assignees:

SECY Due Date: NONE

Subject: 2.206 - Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power System

Description:

CC Routing: RegionI; OGC; Tanya.Mensah@nrc.gov; Catherine.Scott@nrc.gov

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Response/Package: NONE

Other Information

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Originator Name: Thomas Saporito

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Addressee: Annette Vietti-Cook, SECY

Date Response Requested by Originator: NONE

Incoming Task Received: E-mail

Jaegers, Cathy

From: Thomas Saporito [saporito3@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2011 7:29 AM
To: NRCExecSec Resource
Cc: Kugler, Andrew; Gody, Tony; Evans, Carolyn; Hawes, Cathy; Jaczko, Gregory; Horne, Ronnie; Heller, James; Paige, Jason; Hamman, Jeffrey; Wert, Leonard; Sykes, Marvin; Checkle, Melanie; Ninh, Son; R2ORA_EICSMailCenter Resource; DeMiranda, Oscar; Whited, Ryan; Saba, Farideh; Kryk, Scott; Lingam, Siva; Orf, Tracy
Subject: PETITION 2.206 - VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER SYSTEM

Dear Ms. Cook:

This electronic filing serves to operate in the full context of a Petition filed under 10 C.F.R. 2.206 and I respectfully request that you provide this document to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Executive Director for Operations for processing by the agency as delineated below:

On January 14, 2011, the Reformer newspaper published an article about the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant in which Marvin Resnikoff, senior associate for Radioactive Waste Management Associates was quoted as stating: ***"...excessive leakage though the thread seals and that all four had accumulator leakage...If there was over pressurization (and the valves didn't work) they wouldn't be able to cool down the reactor. . . If the feedwater pipes burst, it would result in a meltdown."***

The undersigned Petitioner, contends that the licensee, Entergy knew - or should have known - about the failure of the nuclear safety devices and systems associated with the operation of the nuclear reactor - but failed to timely report this event as required by the licensee's technical specifications and NRC operating license. Thus, the Petitioner requests that the NRC take escalated enforcement action against the license to include, but not be limited to, (1) issuing a confirmatory order requiring the licensee to immediately bring the reactor in question to a cold shutdown mode of operation; (2) issue a civil penalty against the licensee; (3) cause the removal of licensee employees responsible for this matter from NRC licensed activities for a period of no-less than 5-years; and (4) cause an immediate NRC investigation and inspection of the licensee's Vermont Yankee nuclear facility to ensure that all nuclear safety-related systems are properly operational in accordance with the licensee's technical specifications and NRC license.

Kind regards,
Thomas Saporito, Petitioner

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Group says Entergy withheld safety info

By JOSH STILTS / Reformer Staff

Friday January 14, 2011

BRATTLEBORO -- A radioactive waste group is asking the governor and the public service board to investigate a potential political cover-up at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant.

Radioactive Waste Management Associates, of Bellows Falls, in a letter addressed to Gov. Peter Shumlin, alleges that Entergy, which owns and operates the nuclear plant in Vernon, withheld information which could have played a vital role in the November gubernatorial race.

Marvin Resnikoff, senior associate for Radioactive Waste Management Associates, said during a refueling outage in April, Entergy knew that three of the four relief valves, which manage pressure for the feedwater system, had "excessive leakage through the thread seals and that all four had accumulator leakage."

Resnikoff received his doctorate in physics from the University of Michigan and in August appeared before President Obama's blue ribbon commission on nuclear reactor safety.

The failure of the relief valves wasn't taken as seriously as it should have been and could have led to a feedwater pipe rupture or much worse, he said.

"If there was over pressurization (and the valves didn't work) they wouldn't be able to cool down the reactor," Resnikoff said. "If the feedwater pipes burst, it would result in a meltdown."

Over the course of six months, Yankee engineers determined that two of the four relief valves were inoperable and that it was a reportable event on Oct. 26, according to a licensee event report submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on Dec. 22.

A similar valve problem was discovered at the Hope Creek reactor in New Jersey and was concluded within one week the cause of the problem and how to fix it, Resnikoff said.

"Had Entergy analyzed this problem in one week, the matter would have become a factor in the gubernatorial election," Resnikoff wrote. "Whether Entergy withheld this vital safety information because of political motivation or whether the company is simply incompetent, the matter is serious and should be investigated."

According to Vermont Yankee spokesman Larry Smith there was no delay in reporting.

"We did the test in April outage, then the components were replaced," Smith said. "In order to determine reportability of test failures like this we need to have some material testing done on the components."

After contracting with an off-site laboratory, the testing of the components took months to complete, he said.

The relief valves provide protection for the plant's reactor coolant system, Neil Sheehan, NRC spokesman, wrote in an e-mail to the *Reformer*.

"Their purpose is to relieve pressure during events in which the reactor is shut down suddenly while high pressure remains," he wrote. "The depressurization function is important because it is designed to prevent damage to the system and to allow the injection of coolant (water) into the reactor vessel following an accident."

The event did not pose a threat to public health or safety, Smith said.

Resnikoff argues, however, that the condition of the relief valves violated the Technical Specifications and "seriously reduced the safety margins."

In the case of a loss of coolant accident, the failure of two of the valves to open could have caused damage to the

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Subject: PETITION 2.206 - VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER SYSTEM

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