

MAR 28 1978

The Honorable William Proxmire  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Proxmire:

I am responding to your referral dated March 7, 1978, of a letter from your constituents, Mr. & Mrs. Gene Sturchio. Their letter expresses concern about the pending application of the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation for expanding the spent fuel storage capacity at the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant. As you know, the present moratorium on reprocessing of spent fuel and the lack of off-site storage capacity has resulted in a situation where additional storage capacity on-site is being proposed in order to allow the continuing electric power production from nuclear plants for the next few years until the long term disposition of spent fuel is resolved. The Department of Energy is responsible for the national policy for radioactive waste disposal and is engaged in studies and programs to that end.

With regard to the proposed expansion of the capacity for spent fuel storage at Kewaunee, let me offer the following background information. Spent fuel assemblies which are removed from a nuclear reactor during refueling operations are stored temporarily in an on-site spent fuel storage pool. This on-site spent fuel storage capability has always been an integral part of a reactor facility licensed by the NRC. To ensure safe storage of the spent fuel, the NRC staff determines, as part of its licensing review for each facility, that the licensee has provided sufficient safety margins in the design of the spent fuel pool, the spent fuel pool cooling system, the spent fuel storage racks and other auxiliaries needed for handling the spent fuel.

Usually, the spent fuel storage capacity provided at a reactor facility is for the number of fuel assemblies comprising approximately one and one-third reactor cores. This is based on providing storage for the one-third of the reactor core that is generally replaced during each refueling plus sufficient storage to enable unloading the operating core at any time. The fuel assemblies unloaded during refueling normally would be shipped off-site within the interim period to the next refueling (about 12 to 18 months).

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Presently, off-site storage capacity in the United States is very limited. Therefore, most spent fuel is being stored on-site at operating reactors until expanded off-site storage capacity is available. The ultimate disposition of the spent fuel is the subject of numerous studies presently in progress. Enclosed is an NRC press release dated September 10, 1975, which provides additional information concerning this subject. To resolve the non-availability of adequate off-site storage and reprocessing capability, several licensees of operating reactors have applied to the NRC for approval to increase the spent fuel storage capacity at their facilities. Based on the staff's safety review and environmental impact appraisal and findings that the proposals are acceptable, the NRC has issued amendments to individual facility operating licenses authorizing the proposed increase of the spent fuel storage capacity.

A copy of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Handling and Storage of Spent Light Water Power Reactor Fuel, NUREG 0404 dated March 1978 is enclosed. Section 8 findings of that statement conclude that increasing the capacities of individual fuel storage pools is environmentally acceptable.

With respect to the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant, the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (the licensee) has filed on November 14, 1977, an application with the NRC for an increase of the on-site spent fuel storage capacity. The NRC has published in the Federal Register a notice of consideration of proposed modification to spent fuel storage for the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant (copy enclosed). The notice in the Federal Register stated that any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing within 30 days from its publication on December 30, 1977. No requests for hearing were received during the thirty day period. However, one individual, Mrs. Wend Schaefer, has indicated an interest in possibly submitting a late request for hearing. We will review such request, if made, to determine whether good cause can be shown for such late request.

The staff will review the application with respect to all significant safety considerations and potential environmental impacts and will prepare a detailed safety evaluation and an environmental impact appraisal setting forth its findings with respect to the public health and safety and environmental impact aspects of the proposal. The NRC would issue an amendment to the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant license approving the proposed increase of the on-site fuel storage capacity only if these findings are in accordance with applicable NRC regulations.

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Honorable William Proxmire

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Should the license amendment be issued, a copy of the amendment and its supporting Safety Evaluation Report and Environmental Impact Appraisal would be placed in the Local Public Document Room located at Kewaunee Public Library, 314 Milwaukee Street, Kewaunee, Wisconsin 54216.

As you requested I am returning the Sturchio's letter to your office along with a duplicate of this response.

Sincerely,

(Signed) William J. Dircks

William J. Dircks  
Assistant Executive Director  
for Operations

Enclosures:

1. NRC Press Release dated September 10, 1975
2. Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Handling and Storage of Spent Light Water Power Reactor Fuel, NUREG 0404 dated March 1978
3. Federal Register Notice dated December 30, 1977

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Honorable William Proxmire

- 3 -

Should the license amendment be issued, a copy of the amendment and its supporting Safety Evaluation Report and Environmental Impact Appraisal would be placed in the Local Public Document Room located at Kewaunee Public Library, 314 Milwaukee Street, Kewaunee, Wisconsin 54216.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:

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FROM: Sen. William Proxmire		ACTION CONTROL		DATES		CONTROL NO. 03470	
		COMPL DEADLINE		3/21/75		DATE OF DOCUMENT	
		ACKNOWLEDGMENT				3/21/75	
		INTERIM REPLY				PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF:	
TO: Cong Liaison		FINAL REPLY		F/D		<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN	
		FILE LOCATION		F/D		<input type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
						OTHER: <u>Enlight</u>	
DESCRIPTION <input type="checkbox"/> LETTER <input type="checkbox"/> MEMO <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER				SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS			
Encl ltr from Cong Secrelrio opposing expansion of waste storage capacity at the Kennewick plant				Return incoming w/reply Mark envelope to Attn: Pat			
CLASSIFIED DATA							
DOCUMENT/COPY NO.				CLASSIFICATION			
NUMBER OF PAGES				CATEGORY			
POSTAL REGISTRY NO.				<input type="checkbox"/> NSI <input type="checkbox"/> RO <input type="checkbox"/> FRD		SECRET 78-0005	
ASSIGNED TO:		DATE		INFORMATION ROUTING		LEGAL REVIEW <input type="checkbox"/> FINAL <input type="checkbox"/> COPY	
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No. 78-0405Logging Date 3/10/78

## NRC SECRETARIAT

TO: ☐ Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Exec. Dir./Oper. ☐ Gen. Counsel  
☐ Cong. Liaison ☐ Solicitor  
☐ Public Affairs ☐ Secretary  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Incoming: Bill Proximre, USS

From: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Congressional Date 3/7/78Subject: Re: constituent concern with Kewaunee  
County nuclear power plant.☒ Prepare reply for signature of:☐ Chairman☐ Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_☒ EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY Date due March 21☐ Signature block omitted☐ \_\_\_\_\_☐ Return original of incoming with response☐ For direct reply\*☐ For appropriate action☐ For information☐ For recommendationRemarks: Cys to: OCA to Ack.For the Commission: Davis

\*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Mail Facility

*incoming*

**United States Senate**

March 7, 1978

To ensure proper handling please return all  
correspondence TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Pat

Respectfully referred to:

Office of Congressional Liaison  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C.

Please respond to the attached inquiry in  
duplicate and return the enclosure. Thank  
you for your cooperation.

*Bill Fanning*

U.S.S.

1978 FEB 28 PM 2:00

"Walden Too"  
Algoma, Wis. 54201  
February 22, 1978

Pat

The Honorable Senator Wm Proxmire  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Proxmire:

It is a fact that the nuclear power plant  
in Kewaunee County has requested Federal  
permission to expand their waste storage plant.

Please do not permit this! We know,  
as you do, that the life of this nuclear  
waste is in excess of 250,000 years.

Until such time as some safe way to  
store this nuclear waste is discovered, we  
do not want the storage capacity of the  
Kewaunee Nuclear plants to be expanded.

We appreciate your record for public  
service, so vote and do all you can  
to STOP IT.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. Gene Sturchio.

P.S. Please let me know your decision!