

DCC

IMMEDIATE
PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

May 22, 1979

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-79-67AP

This preliminary notification constitutes summary information of an event of safety or public interest significance. The information presented is a summary of information as of 7:00 a.m. on May 22, 1979.

Facility: Three Mile Island Unit 2
Middletown, Pennsylvania (DN 50-320)

Subject: NUCLEAR INCIDENT AT THREE MILE ISLAND - REPORTED DEATHS OF COWS

Newspaper, television and radio stories this past weekend have reported that a number of cows have died in a herd near TMI at the Hoover Farm in Bainbridge, Pennsylvania. The article in the Harrisburg Sunday Patriot News reported that the owner of the herd believed the deaths were caused by the accident at TMI. The deaths all involved cows giving birth. Twelve calves have been stillborn and 7 cows have died after giving birth. The article stated that the state lab and the Hershey Medical Center have conducted post mortems and other tests on the dead animals. The symptoms common to all the deaths were intrauterine infections and anemia.

On Sunday afternoon, May 20, 1979, an NRC survey team accompanied by an EPA representative went to the Hoover Farm located about six miles southeast of the plant. Mr. Hoover and his wife stated that they suspect the cows died from leukemia caused by the radiation from TMI. They stated that they never had this problem in the past. They also stated that they knew of two other farmers that were having similar problems. The initial death occurred on April 5. The survey team took samples of feed, grass, soil, well water and milk for radiological analysis. The EPA representative also collected samples.

The Pennsylvania State Department of Agriculture has veterinarians looking into the problem. They are investigating the possibility that a virus infection is the cause of the deaths and that, if so, in a few days they will have identified the virus. The State Bureau of Radiological Health will make a radiological examination of the internal organs of one cow. Another State Agency will examine them for heavy metals. The FDA has sent a veterinarian from the Philadelphia regional office to examine the herds involved.

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