

FROM: Sen. Strom Thurmond	ACTION CONTROL	DATES	CONTROL NO. 01576
	COMPL DEADLINE	3/14/77	
	ACKNOWLEDGMENT	2/24/77	DATE OF DOCUMENT 2/18/77
	INTERIM REPLY		
TO: Carlton Scovier	FINAL REPLY	K/ Busche	PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF:
	FILE LOCATION	3/24/77	<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN <input type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OTHER: Quitted
DESCRIPTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LETTER <input type="checkbox"/> MEMO <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS		
Encl ltr from Mr. & Mrs. Herman W. Senter re the recent accidental dumping of contaminated water at the Oconee Nuclear Station & concerns re alleged cover-up by Duke Power with cooperation of government inspectors			
CLASSIFIED DATA			
DOCUMENT/COPY NO.		CLASSIFICATION	
NUMBER OF PAGES		CATEGORY	
POSTAL REGISTRY NO.		<input type="checkbox"/> NSI <input type="checkbox"/> RD <input type="checkbox"/> FRD	
ASSIGNED TO:	DATE	INFORMATION ROUTING	LEGAL REVIEW <input type="checkbox"/> FINAL <input type="checkbox"/> COPY
Volgonau	2/28/77	Cosulich Busche	ASSIGNED TO:
			DATE
			NO LEGAL OBJECTIONS NOTIFY:
			<input type="checkbox"/> EDO ADMIN & CORRES BR
			EXT. _____
			COMMENTS: NOTIFY:
			EXT. _____
			JCAE NOTIFICATION RECOMMENDED: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

NRC FORM 232
(11-75)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

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PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL

C O P Y

For: KEN CLARK

February 2, 1977

From: Corporate Communications Department
Duke Power Company
422 South Church Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SENECA, S. C. -- Duke Power Company announced today that after discussions with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, it was adding certain procedures and hardware to the operation of its Oconee Nuclear Station near here.

H. B. Tucker, Manager of Duke's Nuclear Division, said that the action was taken to prevent the inadvertent release of water containing some radioactivity such as occurred two weeks ago when some water from the turbine building sump at Oconee was pumped into outside holding basins and some of this water was permitted to enter the Keowee Hydro Station's tailrace for a short time. This release was diluted by the flow of water from operation of the Keowee Hydro-Station which was running for the production of electricity during the recent frigid weather.

Both the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Duke Power have agreed that the occurrence resulted in no effect whatsoever on public health and safety.

--0--

RRP020207

Distribution: A B C D

C O P Y



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, REGION II-
230 Peachtree Street N.W., Suite 818, Atlanta, Georgia 30303

No: II-77-07
Contact: Ken Clark
Telephone: (404) 221-4503

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Wednesday, February 2, 1977)

NRC SAYS DUKE POWER COMPANY WILL ACT TO LIMIT RADIOACTIVE DISCHARGES
INTO KEOWEE RIVER AT OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION NEAR SENECA, SOUTH CAROLINA

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Office of Inspection and Enforcement in Atlanta said today that Duke Power Company will take action to improve management of systems containing radioactive liquids at Oconee Nuclear Station near Seneca, South Carolina, so as to limit the discharge of radioactivity into the Keowee River to a minimum.

NRC Regional Director N. C. Moseley said these actions are being taken following unplanned release of radioactive Iodine-131 into the river in mid January which was in excess of NRC regulations governing plant operations.

Water samples taken following the release by South Carolina health officials indicated that radioactivity in the river at the nearest drinking water station posed no threat to public health and safety.

Oconee Unit 1 experienced a steam generator tube leak on January 15. During tests to determine the location of the leak, a gasket failure released water to the turbine building which drained to a sump and subsequently to holding ponds which empty into the Keowee River.

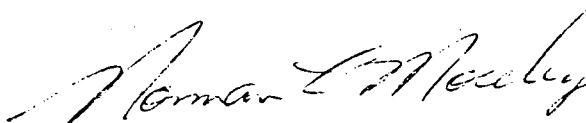
Moseley said Duke officials have agreed to incorporate into plant operations the use of additional equipment and procedures to improve the use of liquid radioactive waste treatment systems and to improve control of contaminated water released to the river.

FEB -1 1977

appropriate plant procedures. This equipment is to be made available and ready for use on or before February 15, 1977, and further, this equipment will be maintained until permanent corrective actions have been implemented.

If our understanding of your planned actions as described above is not in accordance with the actual plans and actions being implemented, please contact this office immediately.

Very truly yours,



Norman C. Moseley, Director
Region II



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION II
230 PEACHTREE STREET, N.W. SUITE 818
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

FEB -1 1977

In Reply Refer To:
IE:II:ADK
50-269/76-5
50-270/76-5
50-287/76-5

Duke Power Company
ATTN: Mr. William O. Parker, Jr.
Vice President, Steam Production
P. O. Box 2178
422 South Church Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242

Gentlemen:

This refers to the discussions held with Messrs. Thies and Tucker on February 1, 1977, regarding the secondary system leakage that occurred on January 17, 1977, resulting in a discharge of in excess of three Curies of I-131 to the Keowee River by way of the settling basins.

With regard to this occurrence, we understand that you have undertaken or will undertake the following actions:

- a. Prepare and use as needed, a procedure to minimize radioactivity discharges from the secondary system to turbine building sumps and subsequently to the environment in the event of future primary to secondary system leakage. This procedure will include use of the condensate system filter demineralizers to reduce the activity levels and transfer of contaminated water to the liquid radioactive waste treatment system. The procedure will be implemented on or before February 4, 1977.
- b. Prepare and use as needed, a procedure to minimize the volume of liquids released to the turbine building and Powdex sumps in the event they become highly contaminated. The procedure will be implemented on or before February 4, 1977.
- c. Setup and maintain in operating order temporary pumps and hoses as necessary to provide a means of transferring contaminated water from the turbine building and Powdex sumps to the liquid radioactive waste system and incorporate the use of this equipment into

Regardless of the low magnitude of the incremental dose to members of the public, the NRC will require DPC to take effective action to minimize the possibility of additional unplanned releases in order to keep individual and general population doses as low as reasonably achievable.

As with all cases of this type, the NRC reviews the aspects of each event to determine appropriate enforcement action. This evaluation effort is now in progress. Evaluations of this type include consideration of the significance of the event and associated noncompliance with NRC requirements, as well as the licensee's previous compliance history. Sanctions available to the NRC include notices of violations, civil monetary penalties, and orders for modification, suspension or revocation of the license.

Copies of NRC inspection reports, enforcement correspondence, and DPC's responses are routinely made available for review by the public in the Oconee Public Library at Walhalla, South Carolina.

Attachments:

1. Ltr to W. O. Parker, DPC
fm N. C. Moseley, NRC
Region II, dtd 2/1/77
2. NRC Press Release -
No. II-77-07 dtd 2/2/77,
DPC to Limit Radioactive
Discharges into Keowee River
at Oconee
3. DPC Press Release to K. Clark,
NRC Region II, dtd 2/2/77

Even though the release was insignificant from the public health perspective, certain aspects of the licensee's effluent control practices were reviewed in depth by Region II radiation specialists. This investigation, which was completed on January 28, indicated the need for corrective action to minimize recurrence. Commitments for immediate corrective action were obtained from senior Duke Power Company (DPC) management and documented in a letter to DPC on February 1, 1977 (copy attached).

Information received from DPC and other State sources indicated increasing public concern about the release. Accordingly, NRC issued a public announcement on February 2, 1977. DPC also issued a press release on that date. Copies of both press releases are attached.

On February 4, 1977, at NRC's request, representatives of DPC met with the Region II staff in Atlanta. During this meeting NRC representatives expressed concern about an apparent weakness in DPC's management system which allowed this release to occur. Duke representatives were informed that in NRC's view the release was avoidable, and that the plant staff did not do all that it should have done to reduce the amount of radioactivity released to the environment. Duke representatives were responsive. They discussed action already taken and indicated a willingness to take further corrective action to prevent recurrence of such events.

Following the news releases on February 2, the NRC Office of Public Affairs reported extensive media coverage of the event in the Clemson area and nearby cities. The DPC office in Clemson was picketed. About 200 citizens met with DPC officials on February 15, 1977. Members of the NRC Region II staff attended this meeting along with representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State of South Carolina. During this meeting DPC stated that in order to relieve public concern about prompt reporting to the public of such events, DPC would henceforth make prompt public announcements whenever radioactive liquid release limits had been exceeded.

It has been estimated that this event could result in no more than a 0.5 millirem thyroid dose to individuals drinking Clemson water. For the purpose of perspective, 0.5 millirem may be compared to EPA's new Fuel Cycle Standard which limits individual thyroid doses to 75 millirems per year (40 CFR 190) and to the current Federal Radiation Council guidance value of 1,500 millirems per year to the thyroid. Additional perspective can be obtained by comparing 0.5 millirem to the whole body dose of about 100 millirems per year caused by exposure to naturally occurring background radiation.

Attachment

Summary of Event and Inspection Activities Oconee Unplanned Release of Contaminated Water

January 17, 1977

The Oconee Unit 1 Reactor was shut down on January 15, 1977, for repair of a steam generator tube leak. This repair was necessary because small amounts of water containing radioactive materials consisting principally of Iodine 131, were leaking from the primary coolant system into the secondary coolant system and contaminating the water in the secondary system. During a test on the shut down unit on the evening of January 17, 1977, contaminated secondary coolant leaked to a turbine building sump through a broken gasket. The contents of the sump, which are not normally contaminated, were automatically pumped to a pond outside the plant. The pond overflowed into the Keowee River.

Two inspectors from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Region II (Atlanta) were on site and began looking into this event on January 18, 1977. Specific information on the released quantities was obtained and evaluated by radiation specialists in the Atlanta office. The Keowee River is the source of potable water for the town of Clemson, South Carolina and the Clemson University and NRC wanted to be sure there was no danger to the public. The evaluation revealed that even though the instantaneous release rate specified in the plant operating license had been exceeded briefly, the released contaminated water, when mixed with 3.5 billion gallons of water flowing into the Keowee River, resulted in an average Iodine 131 concentration in the river water very much lower (at least a factor of 10) than the average annual concentration permitted by rigorous NRC standards set for the protection of the public. Based upon this evaluation, it did not appear that there was any significant public health hazard or need to alert the public.

As a precautionary measure, on January 19, the NRC Region II office notified the Department of Health and Environmental Control, State of South Carolina, and suggested they obtain water samples from the Keowee River for analysis. Duke Power Company also took water samples for the same purpose at several locations downstream from the release point. On January 24, the State, having taken samples including samples near Clemson, South Carolina, reported to the Region II office that their water analyses had confirmed the initial evaluation. Peak contamination levels were reported by the State to be about a factor of 25 below the permissible average annual concentration. Water sample results reported by Duke Power Company were consistent with the results reported by the State. Having confirmed the initial evaluation (that the release would have an insignificant impact upon public health), there still appeared to be no need to alert the public. The situation at the time, (1/24/77) also did not indicate any heightened public concern to the point where a public announcement was needed to inform or clarify matters.

7 February, 1977

Senator Ernest Hollings
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Honorable Ernest Hollings:

There are a number of people in the Clemson area who are quite disturbed about the recent spill of radioactive iodine by Duke Power Company into the waters of Lakes Keowee and Hartwell and Duke's subsequent belated reporting of this spill to proper authorities. Apparently this is not the first instance of negligence on Duke Power's part. There has been almost no coverage of this accident in the news and we are concerned that this may be passed off as simply another "minor incident."

Since the health hazard from radioactive substances is in cumulative terms, we are extremely anxious that such contaminating accidents do not occur again. This issue very directly affects the health and quality of life of South Carolinians. Therefore, we urge you to have this matter investigated, to see that punitive action is indeed taken against Duke Power Company, and to take action to prevent reoccurrences of nuclear contamination of our waters.

People for a Clean Environment

Deborah Garland Johnson, Clemson
204 Cedar Lane

Ell Schmidt
205 Cedar Lane Clemson S.C.

Bernice B. Holt, 206 Strawberry

Albert W. Holt " "

Donald J. Neels, 201 S. S. Clemson S.C.

Mary L. Miles, 201 Grove Dr.
Clemson, SC

Jill M. Frey, 21A Cove St., Clemson

Joyce Fry, 21A Cove St., Clemson

John D. Johnson, 204 Cedar Lane
Clemson

Frieda Hammett-Bogger, 431 Oak
Pawlet

Louis B. Bogger, 431 Oak Ln., Pawlet, S.C.

ERNEST F. HOLLINGS
SOUTH CAROLINA

OFFICES:

SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
202-224-6121

FEDERAL BUILDING
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA
803-765-5731

FEDERAL BUILDING
SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA
803-585-3702

141 EAST BAY
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
803-723-5211

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

TO: Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Congressional Affairs
Room 1165
1717 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20555

ENCLOSURE FROM:

Ms. Deborah Garland Johnson
and various other South Carolinians
204 Cedar Lane
Clemson, SC 29631

RE: spill of radioactive iodine into Lakes Keowee and Hartwell
by Duke Power Company
I forward the attached for your consideration. I would
appreciate receiving any information you may wish to
submit to me in reporting back to my constituent.

Please return the enclosed correspondence.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,



Fritz Hollings

Reply to:

Senator Ernest F. Hollings
437 Old Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Attn: Rebecca A. Kojm phone-224-6121

2/14/77
2:00

Enclosures:

1. Ltr fm "People for a Clean Environment" to Sen Hollings dtd 2/7/77
2. Summary of Inspec. Activities w/atts (3).

Distribution:

L. V. Gossick, EDO
W. J. Dircks, EDO
E. Volgenau, OIE
J. G. Davis, DDIE
L. N. Underwood, IE
G. Ertter (EDO-1501)
IE Files

ELD Central Files

IE Reading Files
EDO Reading Files
OCA (3) w/inc.

OFFICE						
SURNAME						
DATE						

MAR 22 1977

The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Hollings:

Your letter, received February 14, 1977, requested information regarding a recent spill of radioactive water into the Keowee River from the Oconee Nuclear Station which occurred on January 17, 1977.

The licensee reported the matter immediately to our Inspectors from the Region II office in Atlanta, who happened to be at Oconee on other matters at the time. They made a preliminary review of the event on January 18 which disclosed no need for public alarm. Nevertheless, an indepth investigation into the facts surrounding the spill was conducted the following week and completed on January 28, 1977. Commitments for immediate corrective action to prevent recurrence were obtained from Duke Power Company on February 1.

While our investigation results indicate the spill to have an insignificantly small effect on public health, we believe it was avoidable and that steps should have been taken by the plant staff to reduce the release once it had been detected.

As with all matters of this type, the NRC reviews the aspects of each event to determine appropriate enforcement action. The evaluative effort is now in progress. When the investigation report and evaluation are complete a copy will be forwarded to you. For your use in the interim, we have enclosed a brief summary of actions taken to date.

Your interest in this matter is appreciated. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

William J. Dircks
Assistant Executive Director
for Operations

OCA

EDO

Enclosures: ^{MIP} BWeiss 3/16/77
(See next page)

OFFICE	FCEB	FCEB	DFO	OEED	DD:IE	D:IE
SURNAME	GCGower jb	GW Roy 3/15/77	DThompson	JPMurray	JGDavis	EVoldenau
DATE	3/15/77	3/15/77	3/15/77	3/15/77	3/17/77	3/17/77



NRC-OCONEE

Box

NRC_OCONEE_3497_0017

Accession

01501

FEB 17 1977

Rt. 1, Box 27
Seneca, S. C. 29678
February 14, 1977

Senator Strom Thurmond
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Senator Thurmond:

We are very upset and angered by the manner in which the recent accidental dumping of contaminated water at the Oconee Nuclear Station was handled by Duke Power Company and by government regulatory personnel. We believe that Duke Power, with the cooperation of government inspectors, tried to hide the accident and, when discovered, lied about its possible consequences.

We realize that this particular accident -- certainly not the first at the Oconee plant -- may have minor consequences. What sorely angers us about this incident and others that preceded it is that we were not warned immediately after the accident that a potential hazard existed. In this most recent case we were not informed that our drinking water might be unsafe and thus not given the option to drink at our own risk. Instead we found some two weeks later that we unwittingly drank Iodine-131 which has now accumulated in our bodies.

Perhaps the most disturbing thing about this latest accident is that we who live and work so near the Oconee Nuclear Station cannot trust or believe the claims of power company spokesmen or government inspectors concerning safety of the nuclear plant. Their credibility has been badly damaged; they have lost the public's confidence.

As a short-term solution to the credibility crisis, we suggest that utility companies and government inspectors be required to alert nuclear plant neighbors immediately whenever hazards are suspected. However, the fundamental dangers of nuclear power generation can be eliminated only by discontinuing the use of nuclear power, and we feel this should be done with all possible haste. The many accidents that have occurred at nuclear installations throughout the country show that there is no fool-proof nuclear power generating plant, and that if we continue to employ nuclear energy, a major accident -- a catastrophe -- is inevitable.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane & Herman Senter

Mr. & Mrs. Herman F. Senter

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

T. EDWARD BRASWELL, JR., CHIEF COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

February 18, 1977

Mr. Carlton C. Kammerer, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Mr. Kammerer:

Enclosed is a copy of correspondence which I have received from Mr. and Mrs. Herman Senter. I think you will find it self-explanatory.

I believe that more careful monitoring practices should be instituted or present procedures more closely followed. We need nuclear power, but if the power plants continue to have accidents, public outcry might cause shutdowns. We must avoid that possibility.

Please advise me as to what action you have taken or propose to take.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience, and with best wishes,

Very truly,



Strom Thurmond

ST/abk

Enclosure

RECEIVED
2/25/77
11/15

FROM: Gen. Fritz Hollings		ACTION CONTROL		DATES		CONTROL NO. 01501	
		COMPL DEADLINE		3/2/77		DATE OF DOCUMENT	
		ACKNOWLEDGMENT				Entered	
		INTERIM REPLY				PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF:	
TO: NRC		FINAL REPLY		3/1/77		<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN	
		FILE LOCATION		3/2/77		<input type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
		OTHER:		Entered			
DESCRIPTION <input type="checkbox"/> LETTER <input type="checkbox"/> MEMO <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS					
Encl for Ms Deborah Garland Johnson et al, Clemson, S. C. urging investigation of radioactive spill by Duke Power Co. into Lakes Keowee and Hartwell.		Return enclosure w/reply Mark envelope to Attn: Rebecca A. Kojis					
CLASSIFIED DATA							
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NUMBER OF PAGES		CATEGORY					
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Hollings		2/15/77				NO LEGAL OBJECTIONS NOTIFY:	
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						EXT. _____	
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						EXT. _____	
						JCAE NOTIFICATION RECOMMENDED: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

NRC FORM 232
(11-75)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

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PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL

ERNEST F. HOLLINGS
SOUTH-CAROLINA

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202-224-6121

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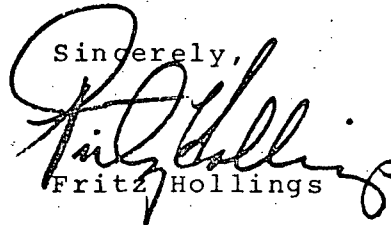
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2/14/77
2:00

7 February, 1977

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Mary L. Miles, 201 Grove Dr.
Clemson, SC

Jill M. Frey, 21A Cove St., Clemson

Jerry Frey 21A Cove Clemson

John H. Johnson 204 Cedar Lane
Clemson

Freida Hammett-Brygger 431 Oak Dr.
Pennington, S.C.

Louis B. Brygger 431 Oak Dr. Pennington, S.C.