

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

610½ Sunflower Drive
Liverpool, New York 13088
September 8, 1981

Mr. David P. Notley.
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Office of Nuclear Regulatory
Research
United States Nuclear
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Washington, D.C. 20555

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT REQUEST

FOIA-81-368
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Dear Mr. Notley:

As per our phone conversation the last part of August, I am writing to you for any information you can give me concerning the requirements to become a firefighter at a nuclear power plant; more specifically, the physical agility qualifications or standards required.

I had applied to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation for a firefighter's position at their Nine Mile Point, Plant #1, in Oswego, New York. I went for an interview and at that time they told me that one of the requirements for the job was that I pass an agility test. They also told me that the test to be given was in the National Fire Protection Association 1001 Code. When I went to take the test on July 25, it was not the NFPA test. It had a few of the requirements of the NFPA test, but the test also had some things not covered in the NFPA code. For the test I took, I had to do the following:

Ride a Stationary Bike for 14 Minutes
A Grip Strength Test
Some Type of Stretching Test
Bent-Knee Sit-Ups
Carry a 125-Pound Dummy
Carry 20 Pounds of Hose on a 2" x 4"
Balance Beam for 20 Feet

After taking the test, I felt that I had done well.

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Three weeks later I received a letter from Niagara Mohawk stating that I failed. In the letter they stated, "The guidelines set forth by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are quite rigid. In order to comply, a prospective candidate is required to pass every phase of the agility test. You were unable to do so. Therefore, Niagara Mohawk is unable to offer you a position at this time."

I then called Mr. Richard A. Wheland, Jr., Supervisor, Area Operations Office. Mr. Wheland has been in charge of setting up the employment of the firefighters for the Fire Brigade. I asked him what I had failed. He told me that I did not meet the requirements on the bike, the stretch test, or the sit-ups. Mr. Wheland told me that the N.R.C. required at least 36 sit-ups in one minute (I did 26); while the NFPA only requires 25 in one and a half minutes. I asked him how I failed the bike test and he could not give me a straight answer. He also told me that the N.R.C. required a candidate to pass six out of six tests in order to get the job. After talking to Mr. Wheland, I decided to call the N.R.C. to find out just exactly what the requirements were. I called the N.R.C. Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. I talked to a man whose first name was Gary and I have forgotten what his last name is. I asked him about the requirements. He could not be sure, but he said that as far as he knew, there were none. Just to be certain, he sent me a copy of the Federal Register dated Wednesday, November 19, 1980, Vol. 45, No. 225. It is entitled, "Part II, Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Fire Protection Program for Operating Nuclear Power Plants."

On page 76613 in the second column of that page under "H. Fire Brigade", it states:

"The qualifications of fire brigade members shall include an annual physical examination to determine their ability to perform strenuous firefighting activities."

I am, therefore, requesting that you sent me the standards for this test which Mr. Wheland said the N.R.C. made Niagara Mohawk give. I have been talking with some other people at Niagara Mohawk and they are still saying that the test and requirements came from the N.R.C.

Any help and information that you can give me will be of great assistance. I feel that the test that was given was not a fair one because:

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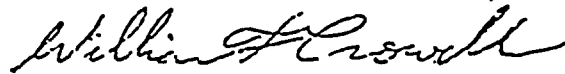
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1. We were told that it would be the NFPA test and we were preparing for that rather than the test that was given;
2. We were told that they were looking for experienced personnel. With the type of test that was given, the only people that could pass it would be kids right out of high school or professional athletes; and
3. We only had approximately two months to prepare for any test.

I would like to thank you very much for your help and cooperation. I will be awaiting your response. I am sure that the rest of the people that took the test will be interested also as out of 35 people that took the test, only 7 persons passed it.

If there is any further information you wish me to provide, please feel free to contact me. Once again, thank you for your time and assistance.

Yours truly,



William F. Crowell

WFC:jlc

