



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 27, 1999

Mr. John H. Mueller
Chief Nuclear Officer
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station
Operations Building, Second Floor
P.O. Box 63
Lycoming, NY 13093

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON LETTER FROM DR. S. PENN REGARDING
CORE SHROUD EVALUATIONS, NINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT
NO. 1 (TAC NO. MA5085)

Dear Mr. Mueller:

In a letter to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) dated March 25, 1999, Dr. Steven Penn of Syracuse, New York, presents his analysis of the NRC's safety evaluation of November 2, 1998, and the related studies that were submitted by Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC) in support of the schedule extension for reinspecting the core shroud vertical welds at Nine Mile Nuclear Station, Unit 1 (NMP1). In his letter, Dr. Penn expresses concern for several errors he perceives in the studies performed by NMPC and its contractors. Enclosure 1 is a copy of Dr. Penn's letter. A copy was also faxed to Mr. S. Leonard of your organization on April 1, 1999.

We request that NMPC provide written comments to the NRC addressing Dr. Penn's expressed concerns. Your comments will be included with the NRC staff's response to Dr. Penn.

The schedule for responding to Dr. Penn's letter was discussed with Mr. Leonard. Based on that discussion, a mutually agreeable date for submitting your written comments to the NRC is April 30, 1999.

In his letter of March 25, 1999, Dr. Penn refers to his earlier letter of December 3, 1998. So that you may better understand the comments in the March 25, 1999, letter, we are also enclosing a copy of the December 3, 1998, letter (Enclosure 2). We have also received a letter from Dr. Penn dated April 15, 1999, (Enclosure 3) containing several suggestions regarding the current core shroud inspection program. Please note that the NRC staff neither endorses nor rejects Dr. Penn's suggestions regarding the NMP1 inspection program. Please inform the NRC staff if you make any changes in your inspection program due to Dr. Penn's letter so that we may include these in our response to Dr. Penn.

We contacted Dr. Penn regarding our proposal to provide to you copies of his letters and to make them publicly available. He expressed no objection to this approach.

9905040302 990427
PDR ADDCK 05000220
Q PDR

NRC FILE CENTER COPY

DF011



11

J. Mueller

- 2 -

If you have questions regarding this letter, contact me by phone at (301) 415-3049 or by electronic mail at dsh@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

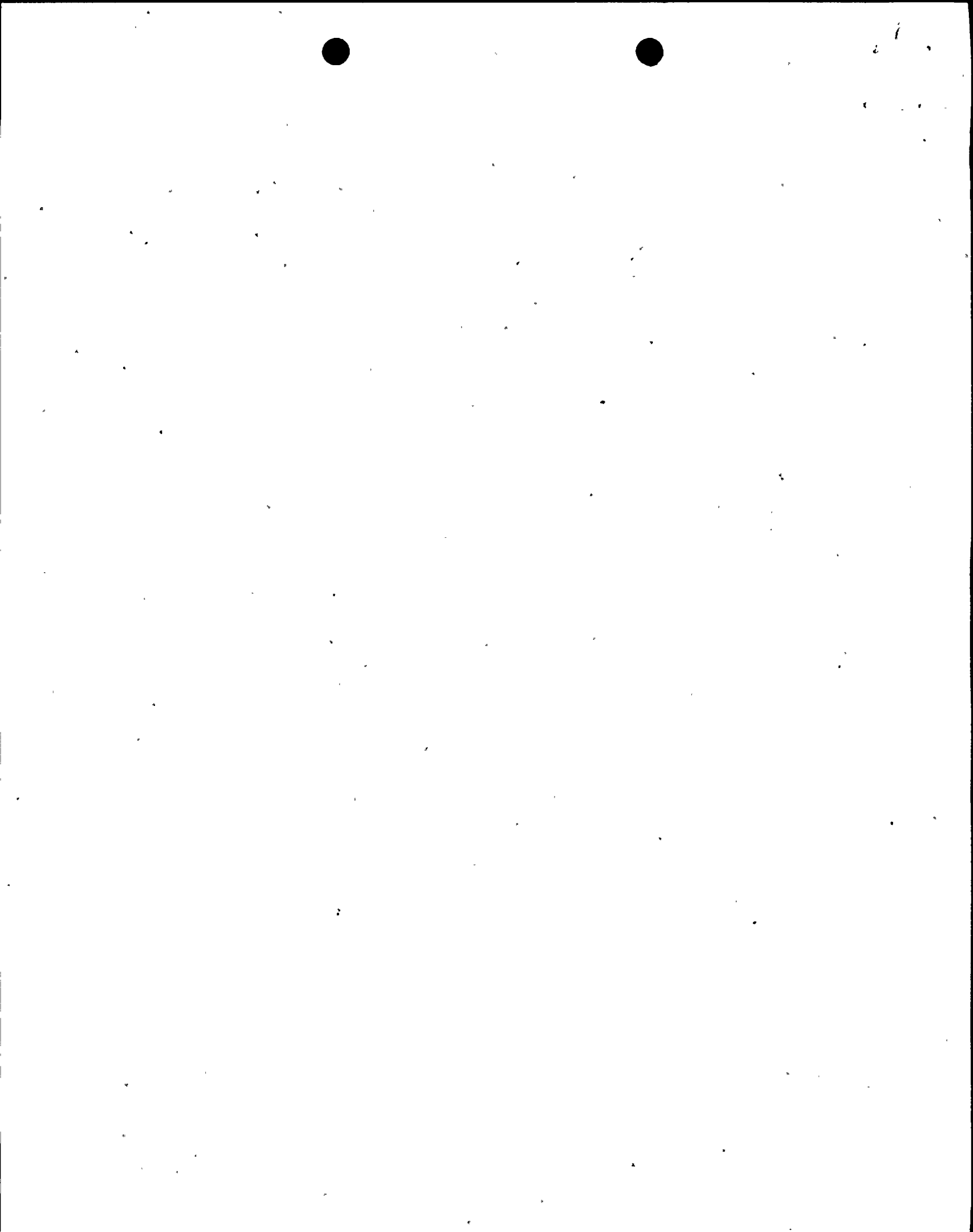


Darl S. Hood, Sr. Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-220

Enclosures: 1. Dr. Penn's letter dated March 25, 1999
2. Dr. Penn's letter dated December 3, 1998
3. Dr. Penn's letter dated April 15, 1999

cc w/encls: See next page



Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station
Unit No. 1

Regional Administrator, Region I
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Dr. Steven Penn
Syracuse University
201 Physics Building
Syracuse, NY 13244

Resident Inspector
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
P.O. Box 126
Lycoming, NY 13093

Charles Donaldson, Esquire
Assistant Attorney General
New York Department of Law
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

Mr. Paul D. Eddy
State of New York
Department of Public Service
Power Division, System Operations
3 Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223

Mr. F. William Valentino, President
New York State Energy, Research,
and Development Authority
Corporate Plaza West
286 Washington Avenue Extension
Albany, NY 12203-6399

Mark J. Wetterhahn, Esquire
Winston & Strawn
1400 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005-3502

Gary D. Wilson, Esquire
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
300 Erie Boulevard West
Syracuse, NY 13202

Supervisor
Town of Scriba
Route 8, Box 382
Oswego, NY 13126

