Commonwealth Edison
Dresden Nuclear Power Station
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Morris, Illinois 60450
Telephone 815/942-2920

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Mail Section

December 21, 1977

BBS LTR #1202-77

James G. Keppler, Regional Director
Directorate of Regulatory Operations - Region III
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

This letter is submitted to clarify our 24 hour notification submitted on 12-7-77 at 1010 hrs. concerning a noble gas release greater than the Technical Specification limit.

During steady state operation on December 6, 1977, Dresden Unit 3 experienced a main condenser air leak. This necessitated a load reduction which began at 0856 hrs. By 0935 hrs. steam jet air ejector flow had increased from 100 to 200 SCFM. This load reduction continued and at 1007 it became necessary to bypass the charcoal adsorbers because of high differential pressure and potential damage to the system. During removal of the charcoal system from service the chimney monitor increased to a reading corresponding to 2 Ci/sec noble gas release on the chimney monitor response curve. Our 24 hour notification was based on this response curve. The turbine was tripped at 1033 hrs. and the reactor scrammed on low vacuum shortly thereafter.

Upon further investigation and recalibration, we have modified our chimney monitor response curve. Using this new curve the chimney monitor reading during the release corresponds to 0.32 Ci/sec, well below our Technical Specification limit of 0.7 Ci/sec. The recalibration method consisted of verifying linear response of the chimney monitor using various strength Cs^{137} sources and fitting the linear curve through the monitor response from samples collected from the chimney. The samples used for this fit were comparable in isotopic composition to those experienced during this type of noble gas release.

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Since the Technical Specification noble gas release limit was not exceeded, this event is not reportable by Technical Specification 6.6.B.1.(b).

Sincerely,

B. R. Shelton for 12/22

B.B. Stephenson
Station Superintendent
Dresden Nuclear Power Station

BBS:dlz

cc: B. Lee
F. Palmer
B. Shelton
D. Adam
Director, Office of Inspection & Enforcement/NRC ✓
Director, Office of Management Information & Program Control/NRC
Chief, Division Nuclear Safety Dept. of Public Health - State of Ill.

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