

May 9, 1984

Docket No. 50-244
LS05-84-008

Mr. Roger W. Kober, Vice President
Electric and Steam Production
Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation
89 East Avenue
Rochester, New York 14649

Docket File
NRC PDR
Local PDR
ORB #5 Reading
NSIC
DCrutchfield
GDick
OELD
RLobel
EJordan
JGrace
ACRS (10)
SEPB

Dear Mr. Kober:

SUBJECT: LEAD TEST ASSEMBLY PROGRAM

Re: R. E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant

Your letter of April 10, 1984 informed us that as part of an agreement with the Empire State Electric Energy Research Company (ESEERCO), Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (RG&E) plans to insert four lead test assemblies (LTAs) in the Ginna Cycle 15 core (Spring 1985). These assemblies were designed by Exxon Nuclear and incorporate a number of advanced fuel design concepts including: (1) annular fuel pellets, (2) zirconium barrier cladding, (3) reduced fuel rod diameter (to the moderator to fuel ratios), and (4) segmented fuel rods (to allow subsequent power ramp experiments in test reactors). We are aware of previous experimental or commercial applications of these advanced fuel design concepts at other facilities, although not all in the same application. The safety analysis of the LTA application was performed by Exxon Nuclear and by the current fuel supplier, Westinghouse, using information supplied by Exxon.

Under the provisions of 10 CFR 50.59, a licensee may conduct tests or experiments (i.e., incorporate LTAs in a reload core design) without prior NRC notification or approval. One of the provisions is that the proposed test or experiment does not involve a change in the plant Technical Specifications. Your letter stated that the plant Technical Specifications will not be affected by the inclusion of the ESEERCO lead assemblies and that, pending final review, no unreviewed safety questions are expected with regard to these assemblies.

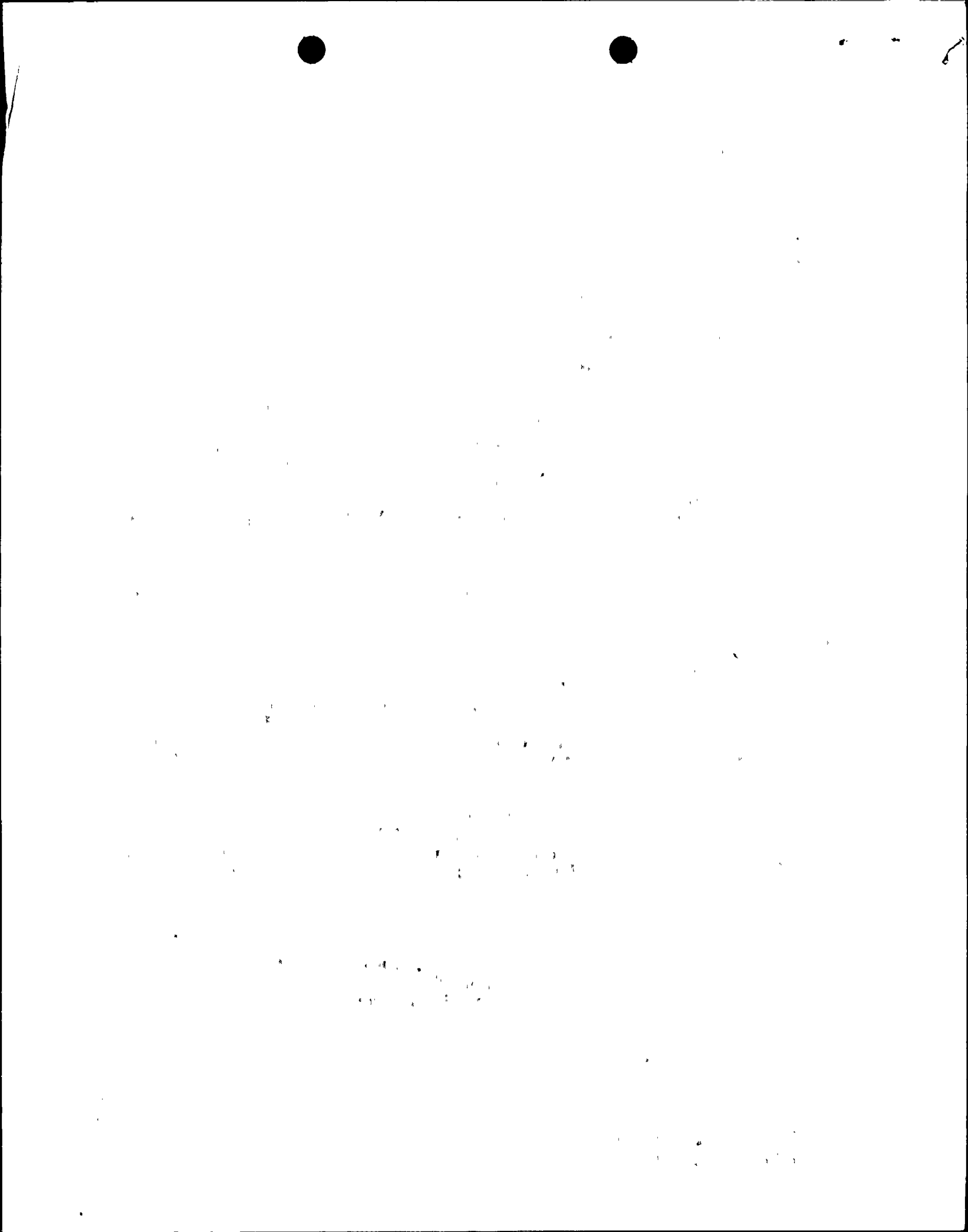
Although the loading of these four lead test assemblies satisfies the staff guidelines for acceptability (that is, limited in number, not loaded in a limiting position, expected behavior considered by the licensee under 10 CFR 50.59) we expect RG&E to submit any future fuel reload of this fuel design for a complete staff review.

Sincerely,
Original signed by Thomas Wambach for
Dennis M. Crutchfield, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch #5
Division of Licensing

cc: See next page *JVM*
DL:ORB #5 DL:ORB #5
GDick:jc for DCrutchfield
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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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Electric and Steam Production
Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation
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Sincerely,

for *Thomas V. Wambach*
Dennis M. Crutchfield, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch #5
Division of Licensing

cc: See next page

Mr. Roger W. Kober

cc

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