

United States Senate

September 2, 1988

Mr. Carlton Kammerer, Director  
Office of Congressional Affairs  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
1712 A Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Kammerer:

Enclosed you will find correspondence I recently received addressing a state matter over which your office has jurisdiction, and I wanted to take this opportunity to forward it to you for your consideration.

As you know, it is my policy to provide whatever assistance I can to my constituents, so any information you are able to furnish, or a copy of your response, would be most appreciated.

Should you feel it appropriate to reply to me directly, I would appreciate your referring to Dory Auerbach.

With kindest regards, I am

Most sincerely,



LAWTON CHILES

LC/rd  
Enclosure

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PDR ADOCK 05000251  
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# HORTENSE & DORY AUERBACH

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August 25, 1988

Honorable Lawton M. Chiles  
United States Senate  
250 SROB  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Lawton:

How many "small" incidents and cover-ups will we have before a serious event; and yet FPL is permitted to consider mergers with capital accumulated with public utility guaranteed profits.

1. 8-16-88 3200 gallons of radioactive coolant spilled because of a leaking pump valve.
2. Fined \$900,000 for violating NRC regulations. Federal officials consider it one of the most poorly managed nuclear plants in the Country.
3. Fined \$790,000 for safety violations.
4. The leak occurred just hours before FPL released a Gov't ordered plan to cure long-time problems, which proposal was submitted just in time to meet the Agency's deadline.
5. FPL leaders agreed that the plant lacked key personnel who had adequate nuclear energy experience even though it began operating 16 years ago.
6. NRC said in its own report that the private report did not go far enough in laying blame at the feet of FPL's management.



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7. NRC used strong language that FPL runs machinery until it breaks down.
8. FPL "Promised" in its report to do but as of today, NRC called for Turkey Point to:
  - a. have more and better trained workers;
  - b. improved security;
  - c. better accident prevention methods;
  - d. and a reorganized maintenance department.

Don't you think this situation should be addressed appropriately after 16 years?

Sincerely,

*Dory*

Dory Auerbach

cc: John Herrington  
Secretary, Dept. of Energy

DA/br

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
LAKELAND, FLORIDA

# Radioactive spill at Turkey Point; FP&L calls it minor

DONNA GEHRKE and RICHARD L. PAPIERNIK

Miami News Reporters

Some 3,200 gallons of radioactive coolant spilled from a broken valve today at the Turkey Point nuclear power plant before emergency steps were taken to stop the leak at the South Dade facility, according to a Florida Power & Light Co. spokesman.

Some 2,500 gallons of the radioactive water leaked out of the containment building for Unit No. 4, one of the two nuclear units at the plant, said spokesman Tom Veenstra. But he stressed that the spill posed no

danger to plant workers or to the public. None of the water spilled into Biscayne Bay although it entered cooling canals around the plant.

"This does not present any particular health hazard to anybody," said Ken Clark, spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in Atlanta.

Clark said some of the water splashed on workers' shoes, but said the contamination was low-level and presented no health hazard.

Veenstra said the water was only "mildly

radioactive" and said exposure to it was the "equivalent of watching color television for a week."

The incident was termed an "unusual event" — the lowest rating for a safety problem under the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's classification system.

The reactor unit was not producing power and was shut down for repairs at the time, Clark said. Plant workers were alerted by an alarm at about 1 a.m. But before the leaking pump valve was shut off, 3,200 gallons had spilled, Veenstra said. Of that,

2,500 gallons seeped outside into nearby canals — "about two Jacuzzis worth," Veenstra said.

Despite assurances by FP&L and NRC officials, anti-nuclear power activist Joette Lorion of South Miami described the spill as a serious incident.

Patrick Godfrey, duty officer at Metro's Emergency Management Office, said his agency received a report of an "unusual event" at the plant, but had no details. He said his office was notified at 12:58 a.m.

Please see FP&L, 4A

# The Miami News

Tuesday, August 16, 1988

HOME EDITION

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## FP&L, from 1A

"An unusual event is the lowest level of emergency that must be reported," Godfrey said. "It means that everything can be handled on-site, and there is no need for off-site help and no threat to the public health."

In the past four years, Turkey Point has been fined more than \$900,000 for violating NRC regulations. Federal officials consider it one of the most poorly managed nuclear power plants in the country. From 1982 to 1986 it was fined \$790,000 for safety violations, more than any U.S. facility.

The leak occurred just hours before FP&L released a government-ordered plan to cure long-time problems at the nuclear facility by reorganizing plant management, substantially reducing overtime, cutting maintenance backlogs, and improving training and security.

The utility submitted the proposal to the NRC yesterday to meet the federal regulatory agency's deadline.

FP&L had been under orders by the NRC to devise a long-range plan to turn around the troubled plant. The NRC staff was examining the utility's proposal today and did not have an immediate comment on it, NRC's Clark said yesterday. "Obviously, it will take time evaluating it," Clark said.

FP&L already has hired "experienced personnel" to fill positions of plant manager, security supervisor, operations superintendent and a newly created post of assistant maintenance superintendent to help improve the facility, according to a corporate statement released today.

FP&L also has suspended a much criticized management rotation system for department heads at Turkey Point to help stabilize the leadership there. It has identified 35 critical positions at the corporate and plant levels and plans to establish new job requirements by Sept. 15.

FP&L also intends to strengthen supervision of contract security at the plant and require 80 percent of the training instructors to hold senior reactor operator licenses, according to a corporate statement released today.

"Operations will be tightened to correct equipment or procedural problems with the aim of improving long-term performance and reliability," the statement said.

In addition, FP&L plans to reduce employee

overtime 40 percent over three years, immediately reduce maintenance backlogs by 15 percent and better organize schedules for preventive maintenance.

Ultimately, the improvements will reduce unplanned plant shutdowns, according to the statement.

In a letter to the NRC, FP&L Board Chairman J.J. Hudiburg said his corporation is already taking steps to improve the plant and will closely monitor the changes.

"If our goals for improvements are not realized, further measures will be taken," Hudiburg promised.

He acknowledged in the letter that "the situation at Turkey Point has not improved at a pace which meets our expectations," but assured NRC officials that a turnaround was possible.

"We are prepared... to accept longer (power production) outages at Turkey Point to accomplish necessary corrective and preventive maintenance," Hudiburg said.

Maintenance will be among the "highest priorities" of the staff, he added.

The utility also plans to revamp its staff to more closely supervise the plant's operations, he said.

"A fundamental reorganization of engineering is underway," the chairman noted. "When completed this fall, FP&L will have a separate, dedicated nuclear engineering organization headed by a seasoned nuclear engineering manager."

Hudiburg noted in his letter that FP&L leaders agreed with a critique by Tulsa-based Enercon Services that found the plant lacked key personnel who had adequate nuclear-energy experience, even though it began operating as a nuclear facility more than 16 years ago.

But last month, the NRC said in its own report that the private report did not go far enough in laying the blame at the feet of FP&L's corporate management.

NRC spokesman Clark said the NRC used strong language in its critique so FP&L executives would stop certain practices, such as running machinery until it breaks down. The NRC called for Turkey Point to have more and better-trained workers, improved security, better accident prevention methods and a reorganized maintenance department — which FP&L has promised to do in its report.

*Miami News reporter Michael Lasalandra contributed to this story.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20511

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