



REGULATORY ~~BOOKLET~~ FREE COPY

July 18, 1978

Mr. Robert I. Smith, President  
Public Service Electric and Gas Company  
80 Park Plaza  
Newark, New Jersey 07101

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Dear Mr. Smith:

Representatives of your company, your biological consultant and interested governmental agencies met July 13th with members of my staff to discuss the kill of weakfish now taking place at the intake structure of the company's Salem Number One nuclear generating plant on the Delaware River.

It was apparent at the meeting that the biologists cannot yet say with confidence how significant this incident is in terms of long-range impact on the weakfish population. That is, not enough data are in hand to determine whether this is an unusual migratory movement of these fish, whether the condition is localized in the area of the plant, or whether this is an unusual population boom of weakfish.

However, while these additional data are being gathered, the continuing kill of large numbers of this important sport and commercial species is cause for concern. At that meeting, we urged that whatever steps could be reasonably taken by your company to mitigate the incident should be carried out. I was encouraged by some of the actions PSE&G has already proposed and by the cooperation shown by your technical staff in supplying our biologists with sampling results. We will monitor carefully the results of your proposed actions and, as you are aware, EPA will be meeting with PSE&G technical staff to assess progress in the situation on Monday, July 24, at your Newark, N.J. offices.

EPA does not intend, at this time, to order mitigating steps in the short term. However, I am confident your desire to demonstrate that Salem One can be operated with minimal adverse impact on the environment will lead you to giving the matter your urgent consideration.

As you know, in the longer term, EPA is evaluating the terms of the discharge permit for Salem One and Two under Section 316 of the Clean Water Act. Your company and its consultant are gathering data to show whether the protections in the plant's once-through cooling system are adequate to minimize adverse environmental impact on shellfish, fish and wildlife in the Delaware River. This must be demonstrated before EPA can approve operation of the plant in the present mode. Undoubtedly one provision you will want to include in your submission is an effective contingency plan for managing and mitigating incidents such as the present one.

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Once again, I urge you to continue to give this matter your immediate attention and to let me know at your earliest convenience additional corrective steps Public Service Electric and Gas proposes to take if your present actions do not effectively reduce the number of fish now being killed.

At your service,

*for Meyer Acobnick*  
Eckardt C. Beck  
Regional Administrator

cc: The Honorable Harrison A. Williams, Jr.  
The Honorable William J. Hughes

bcc: Larry Snowitz  
Office of Congressional Affairs (A-102)

Kirke Harper  
ORIO (A-101)

Shelley E. Asen  
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