

## PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

January 9, 1979

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PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-79-04

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of event of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by IE staff on this date.

Facility: Philadelphia Electric Company  
Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Unit 3  
(DN 59-278)  
Lancaster, PA

Subject: RELEASE OF GASEOUS ACTIVITY IN EXCESS OF TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

On January 8, 1979, at 5:00 a.m. the instantaneous gaseous release rate specified by Technical Specification 3.8.C.1 was exceeded by 270% for 1 1/2 hours releasing approximately 70 Curies of noble gas activity. The reactor had been shutdown on January 5, 1979 and was under-going maintenance on the Reactor Core Isolation Cooling (RCIC) system. The shutdown cooling system was being used periodically to maintain coolant temperature low enough to prevent degassification.

Investigation by the licensee revealed that for the 1 1/2 hour period, the shutdown cooling system was not operated, resulting in coolant temperature exceeding 200°F and causing degassing. During this time RCIC isolation valves were dismantled and provided a leak path from the Reactor Building via the Main Steam Isolation Valve (MSIV) Room to the Unit 3 vent stack. Three personnel (two operators and one health physics technician) had entered the MSIV Room during this time and may have received exposure. The licensee is currently evaluating their exposure.

An NRC inspector is currently onsite conducting a review of this occurrence.

Media interest is not expected. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. A press release is being considered by the NRC.

NRC, Region I, (Philadelphia) received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee at 3:00 p.m., January 8, 1979.

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