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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

December 7, 1979

In Reply Refer To:
RIV
Docket No. 50-382/IE Bulletin No. 79-28

Louisiana Power and Light Co.
ATTN: Mr. D. L. Aswell
Vice President of Power Production
142 Delaronde Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70174

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is IE Bulletin No. 79-28 which requires action by you with regard to your power reactor facility with an operating license or a construction permit.

Should you have questions regarding this Bulletin or the actions required of you, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

Karl V. Seyfrit
Director

Enclosures:
1. IE Bulletin No. 79-28
2. List of Recently Issued IE Bulletins

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7912200 219

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

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IE Bulletin No. 79-28
Date: December 7, 1979

POSSIBLE MALFUNCTION OF NAMCO MODEL EA180 LIMIT SWITCHES AT ELEVATED TEMPERATURES

Description of Circumstances:

The NRC has been recently advised through a 10 CFR 21 report from NAMCO Controls that a malfunction of a NAMCO Model EA180 stem mounted limit switch (SMLS) occurred at the Cooper Nuclear Station. Investigation into the switch failure by the licensee revealed yellow and brown "crystal-like" resin deposits on the internal components of the switch. The affected switch is located inside the drywell containment at this facility and was being used as the replacement switch for an unqualified SMLS previously identified in IE Bulletin Nos. 78-04 and 79-01.

According to the manufacturer, the problem was traced to a batch of top cover gaskets of which some were over-impregnated and insufficiently heat cured. It has been determined that this condition can leave an uncured residue of "Loctite" in the gasket, which vaporizes at sustained temperatures above 175°F. To correct the problem, the manufacturer has revised production techniques beginning September 1979 in order to better control the impregnation process and to properly heat cure the gaskets following impregnation. This problem is unique to all NAMCO Model EA180 series switches received by licensees after March 1, 1979. According to the manufacturer, the suspect switches can be identified by checking the date code which is a 4 digit number stamped on the conduit boss of the switch housing. NAMCO recommends that any EA180 series switch with a date code between 02-79 through 08-79 should have its top cover gasket replaced. Also, licensees should request from their suppliers of equipment on which NAMCO EA180 series switches are used that they check their inventory and replace top cover gaskets on switches date coded between 02-79 through 08-79.

The enclosed letter from NAMCO further describes the high-temperature environmental problem with the top cover gaskets used in their EA180 switches and provides recommendations to correct the problem. According to NAMCO, this letter has been sent to each customer who was shipped EA180 switches between February 21, 1979, and August 24, 1979.

Action to be Taken by Licensees of Po[illegible]
Holders of Construction Permits:

1. Determine if your facility has i[illegible]
switches in any safety-related e[illegible]
containment, including valve pos[illegible]
containment isolation valves.

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