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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

JAN 29 1979

Docket Nos. STN 50-456
and STN 50-457

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
POOR QUALITY PAGES

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Buban, Jr.
Box 89A
Braceville, Illinois 60407

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Buban:

Your letter of January 2, 1979 protesting the licensing of Braidwood Station has been referred to me for reply. It would not be appropriate for the Commissioners to respond directly because the application for an Operating License for the Braidwood Station is pending before an NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, and its rulings and decisions may be subject to review by the Commissioners.

The majority of the particular concerns mentioned in your letter were addressed in our response (enclosed) to a similar letter regarding the impacts of the Braidwood Station.

You were also concerned about fog from the cooling pond and about leakage of stored radioactive wastes. Fogging effects were discussed in our Final Environmental Statement (enclosed), in which our staff meteorologist stated that, "Studies made at existing cooling ponds indicate that steam fog is usually thin and wispy and does not move inland more than 100 to 600 feet. Cooling ponds do not appear to be a major source of surface fog."

In connection with the waste disposal problem, you mention "leakages at dumping sites across the country." While leakages from the primary containment have occurred in a few cases, there has been no case where this leakage was not detected before it leaked an appreciable distance from its containment. In no case was there leakage off the storage site, nor any harmful effects to plant employees or to the public.

I trust these comments have been responsive to your concerns. I am enclosing also a booklet providing information on the overall reactor licensing process and how you may participate more fully in it.

Sincerely,

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Richard C. DeYoung, Director
Division of Site Safety and
Environmental Analysis
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Enclosures:
As stated

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

JAN 29 1979

Packet Nos. STN 50-456
and STN 50-457

Ms. Thelma Corbin
R.R. 2, Box 117
Wilmington, Illinois 60481

Dear Ms. Corbin:

Your letter of January 3, 1979, requesting that the Operating License for the Braidwood Station be denied has been referred to me for reply. It would not be appropriate for the Commissioners to respond directly because the application for an Operating License for the Braidwood Station is pending before an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, and its rulings and decisions may be subject to review by the Commissioners.

A number of your concerns (impact on biota, effect of seepage on wells, dike failure, radioactive effluents) were assessed by the NRC staff in our Final Environmental Statement (FES) issued in July 1974 (copy enclosed). In the FES, the adverse impact of disturbing about 170 acres of woods to build the plant structures, the cooling lake and the pipeline corridor was recognized. However, by far the largest part of the cooling lake area is strip mine spoil (2,838 acres), which many consider unsightly.

To prevent the type of dike failure which occurred at Dresden, the center of the Braidwood dike will contain a "slurry trench," a vertical wall of clay which is nearly impervious to water. Seepage of less than 5 cfs is expected. The drainage ditch outside the dike will assure that seepage will run off rapidly and will not affect wells or drainage in the area. The NRC has required that the applicant monitor groundwater levels near the dike, particularly in the vicinity of old underground mines, to assure that the desired effects are achieved. NRC inspectors will enforce this requirement.

You express also a concern about radioactive effluents from Braidwood Station. The expected amounts of these effluents and the population doses from them are quantitatively described in the FES. The doses are a small fraction of those from natural background radiation. In Table 6.1 of the FES, the pre-operational radiological sampling program for Braidwood is summarized. This program includes the sampling of local milk which you have observed. These data are examined by the NRC and would be used as a baseline to compare with similar monitoring data after the start of plant operation. By means of a large number of radiological technical specifications, monitoring requirements and inspection procedures, the NRC carries out its basic legal responsibility to assure that plant operation would not endanger the health and safety of the public.

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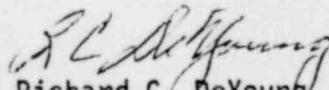
Ms. Thelma Corbin

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Finally, you mention the problem of storing plutonium. The present solution is to store spent fuel containing plutonium at reactor sites in spent fuel pools whose storage capacity has been enlarged. The NRC has appraised the environmental impact of building and operating an expanded spent fuel pool for each of about 36 operating plants to date. We have concluded that there were no significant increases in environmental impacts as measured by radiological effluents, thermal releases, community impacts, or use of material resources. A detailed study was also made of the possible effect of the pool alteration on safety-related matters. We found no significant hazards considerations and concluded that there was reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public would not be endangered. As to long term plans, President Carter established an Interagency Review Group on Nuclear Waste Management in March of 1977, and charged it with developing a strategy for dealing with the waste management problem. The draft report of this group, incorporating a broad range of inputs and views from many governmental, scientific and public groups, was issued for public comment in October 1978. When these comments have been received, reviewed and incorporated, as appropriate, the report will be forwarded to the President for further action.

I trust these comments have been responsive to your concerns. I am enclosing also a booklet providing information on the overall licensing process and how you may participate more fully in it.

Sincerely,



Richard C. DeYoung, Director
Division of Site Safety and
Environmental Analysis
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures:
As stated