METROPOLITAN EDISON COMPANY

GPU UTILITIES CORPORATION

POST OFFICE BOX 480 MIDDLETOWN PENNSYLVANIA 17057 TELEPHONE 717-944-4041

February 26, 1975

3-7-75

Mr. J.P. O'Reilly, Director
Directorate of Regulatory
Region I
631 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

Operating License DPR-50
Docket 50-289

Subject: Unplanned release of radioactive material at TMI through the plant vent from the Auxiliary Building.

Dear Mr. O'Reilly:

This telegram is to confirm the conversation between Lee Spessard (Region I-NRC), and J.G. Herbein (TMI-Station Superintendent) at 0900 hours 25 February 1975.

On February 24, 1975 between 2024 and 2250 an inadvertant release of radioactive material occurred over a period of approximately 2 hours and 26 minutes.

The inadvertant radioactive material release occurred due to a build up of radioactive gas in the Auxiliary Building following a loss of ventillation in the building. The loss of Auxiliary Building ventillation was due to an inadvertant activation of the air intake tunnel deluge fire protection system. The fire system actuation was subsequently traced to a faulty temperature sensor in the air intake tunnel.

The air intake tunnel deluge fire protection system was returned to normal system line up. The Auxiliary Building ventillation fans were started, and the radioactive gas which had accumulated was drawn from the Auxiliary Building into the plant vent and subsequently discharged to the atmosphere.

Analysis of the radiation effluent monitor (RMA-8) recorder charts and local Auxiliary Building samples indicated the radioactive material released was predominately $Xe^{133}$ (98%), and that the instantaneous noble gas release rate was $5.54 \times 10^3$ $m^3$/sec., which is below the technical specification limit of $1.2 \times 10^5$ $m^3$/sec. The average release rate over the 2 hour and 26 minute period of this release was $2.07 \times 10^3$ $m^3$/sec. with a total release of noble gas of 5.37 curies.

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The cause or source of the $Xe^{133}$ gas accumulation in the Auxiliary Building, during the period the vent fans were not operating, is presently unknown.

A detailed air sampling program, which will be accomplished with Auxiliary Building ventillation fans shut off, will be developed and completed in an effort to determine the source and cause of the $Xe^{133}$ gas build up in the Auxiliary Building.

J.G. Herbein
Station Superintendent

JGH/dmn