

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

Region I

Report No. 70-820/78-20

Docket No. 70-820

Safeguards Group 1

License No. SNM-777 Priority 1 Category UR

Licensee: United Nuclear Corporation

Fuel Recovery Operation

Wood River Junction, Rhode Island 02894

Facility Name: Fuel Recovery Operation

Inspection at: Wood River Junction, Rhode Island 02894

Inspection conducted: September 11 - October 6, 1978

Inspectors: J. H. Joyner  
J. H. Joyner, Safeguards NMCS Section Chief

10-30-78  
date signed

A. Gody, Safeguards Chemist

11-7-78  
date signed

G. Smith, Safeguards Auditor

11-7-78  
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11-7-78  
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H. Zibulsky, Safeguards Chemist

date signed

date signed

Approved by: J. H. Joyner  
J. H. Joyner, Nuclear Material Control  
Support Section, Safeguards Branch

10-30-78  
date signed

Inspection Summary:

Inspection on September 11-October 6, 1978 (Report No. 70-820/78-20)

Areas Inspected: Routine, announced inspection by regional based inspectors of nuclear material control and accounting program including: direct observations of plant operations; measurements; and shipping and receiving. The inspection involved 195 inspector-hours onsite by five regional based inspectors.

Results: Of the three areas inspected, no apparent items of noncompliance were identified in two areas; one apparent item of noncompliance was identified in one area (Infraction - failure to prescribe nuclear safety control measures for the storage of SNM in an unauthorized area - Paragraph 2).

## DETAILS

### 1. Persons Contacted

(U) \*R. Gregg, Manager, Quality Assurance  
J. Wakefield, Manager, Plant Operations  
\*D. Daigler, Quality Assurance Engineer  
J. DeLuty, Plant Chemist

The inspectors also interviewed numerous licensee employees including members of the Nuclear Material Control, Quality Assurance and Production groups.

\* denotes those present at the exit interview.

### 2. Direct Observation of Plant Operations

(U) The licensee has experienced shipper-receiver differences on recovery of scrap SNM received from United Nuclear, NPD, Montville, Connecticut. The five inspectors were involved in the direct observation and evaluation of scrap recovery operations. During the period September 11 through September 29, 1978 the licensee was recovering SNM scrap received from United Nuclear, NPD.

(U) The inspectors' review in this area consisted of direct observation, at various times, of both shifts of operation; removal of scrap SNM from shipping containers and identification of material type to documents; comparison of recovery steps to established procedures; audit of recording of strip, declad and dissolution data; and observation of the sampling of dissolver solution for the licensee's lab for uranium determination.

(U) Two United Nuclear, NPD, personnel were also observing recovery during the same period with emphasis being placed on Job W-2929.

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PERSON IS PROHIBITED.)

- (U) A subsequent inspection will be performed after recovery values are determined on the above. A physical inventory was initiated October 2, 1978 and results, which are required in 30 days, will determine the degree of additional inspection review required.
  - (U) The overall observation determined that the licensee is following procedures for recovery with the exception of the following:
  - (U) Condition 9 of the facility license, which incorporates Section 205, "Process Control" of the licensee's approved license application, dated October 13, 1975, requires in part, in paragraph 205.1, "General," that supervision at all levels assure themselves that suitable control measures are prescribed and that all pertinent regulations, controls and procedures relative to nuclear criticality safety or radiological safety are followed by supervision and all operating personnel.
  - (U) Contrary to the above on September 25 and 26, 1978, a fuel element and several element pieces were observed unattended on and against the operator's desk in the process area. There are no operating procedures or written approvals for storage of fuel elements on desks and no signs are posted at or near the operators' desks stating criticality limits.
  - (U) This is an infraction. (78-20-01)
3. Shipping and Receiving
- (U) The inspector reviewed and scheduled, from applicable forms NRC-741, the shipping values for the listed jobs under Paragraph 2 of this report. The quantities were traced to the MBA-55 Material Transfer Sheets and the Job Number - Material Balance forms for all additions to process. No discrepancies were detected.
  - (U) No items of noncompliance were identified.
4. Exit Interview
- (U) A meeting was held at the termination of each week's inspection activities and the findings for that week were presented. The meetings on September 15, 22, and 29 were conducted with the individuals identified in Paragraph 1.