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

May 28, 1980

In Reply Refer To:
RIV
Docket No. STN 50-482/IE Circular No. 80-13

Kansas Gas & Electric Co.
Attn: Mr. Glenn L. Koester
Vice President-Operations
Post Office Box 208
Wichita, Kansas 67201

Gentlemen

The enclosed IE Circular No. 80-13, is forwarded to you for information. If there are any questions related to your understanding of the suggested actions, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

Karl V. Seyfrit

Karl V. Seyfrit
Director

Enclosures:
1. IE Circular No. 80-13
2. List of Recently Issued IE Circulars

cc: w/enclosures
Messrs. Nicholas A. Petrick, SNUPPS
D. T. McPhee, Kansas City Power and Light Company
Gerald Charnoff, Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge
E. W. Creel, Kansas Gas and Electric Company

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SSINS No.: 6830
Accessions No.:
7910250495

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

IE Circular No. 80-13
Date: May 28, 1980

GRID STRAP DAMAGE IN WESTINGHOUSE FUEL ASSEMBLIES

Description of Circumstances:

During the refueling operation at Salem Unit 1, it was noted by the licensee that some of the assemblies that were removed had suffered grid strap mechanical damage. This was reported to the NRC in LER 79-44. Subsequent to this discovery all fuel assemblies were removed from the core for examination. The degree of the damage to the grid straps was classified in three categories: small pieces missing (15 assemblies), grid material ripped and laid over (5 assemblies), larger sections missing and fuel pins exposed (11 assemblies). No damage to the fuel pins was observed. A total of 31 assemblies suffered some grid damage.

The damage appeared to be the result of corner to corner interaction of the grid straps of diagonally adjacent fuel assemblies during the vertical loading and unloading movements. No correlation of the damage to core location, grid strap elevation, or manufacturing and shipping batches has been identified.

The licensee and the fuel manufacturer established the following guidelines for reloading damaged assemblies: (1) those assemblies with full width pieces missing will not be reloaded for cycle 2, (2) those assemblies with deformed edges and those with small pieces missing will be reloaded with special procedures to prevent further damage.

Salem Unit 1 is fueled with 17X17 Westinghouse assemblies. Similar grid problems nave occurred at other facilities fueled with 14X14 and 15X15 Westinghouse assemblies; however, fewer assemblies were damaged in those instances.

Recommended Actions:

All licensees using 14X14, 15X15, or 17X17 Westinghouse assemblies are advised to:

(1) Visually inspect grid straps of discharged from the core as well the spent fuel pool for control returned to the core.