

NRC/PDR



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

JAN 8 1980

Mrs. M. Broude
4730 Tampa Street
Philadelphia, PA 19120

Dear Mrs. Broude:

I am writing in response to your letter to President Carter regarding radiation in food caused by the accident at Three Mile Island. I regret that this answer to your letter has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented me from responding to you as promptly as I would have liked to.

The radioactive materials that were released were primarily radioactive gases. The radioactivity was almost entirely from xenon, which is a chemically inactive gas. As the gases leaked out, the winds diluted them. To determine if food grown in the area was contaminated, the Department of Energy measured the amounts of radioactivity present in the samples of soil, water, air, and vegetation.

Based on these samples and on other information, it was concluded that the principal isotopes in the escaped gases were xenon-133 and xenon-135. Although radioactive iodine was found in samples of some milk, the concentration was less than 1% of the concentration permitted by NRC regulations. Other food samples were tested by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and none of the 377 food samples tested contained reactor-produced radioactivity.

I appreciate your concerns and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public, not only at the Three Mile Island Station, but also at all nuclear power plants.

I have enclosed some material that may be of interest to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harold R. Denton".

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Summary of NUREG-0553

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4730 TAMPA ST
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NRC

POOR ORIGINAL

President Jimmy Carter
Washington, D.C

As an ~~in~~ inhabitant of a city that
is at an unsafe distance from
3 Mile Island I would like an
immediate answer to the following.

How much radiation is contained
in the milk produced in the area
of 3 Mile Island??

What assurance do I have that
radio active food products will not
appear on market shelves in my
area. Food products include, milk,