

JAN 24 1980

Mr. Richard M. Strout
8550 East 25th Street/#2
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74129

Dear Mr. Strout:

Your letter to Commissioner Hendrie concerning the release of radioactive material from the Three Mile Island nuclear station and requesting publications about the accident has been referred to me for response. 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 us from responding to you as promptly as we would have liked.

Releases of radioactive gases from the containment building and releases of contaminated water, except for releases of liquids to the Susquehanna River containing only low or nondetectable levels of radioactivity, are not currently permitted. Before such releases take place, NRC will evaluate the impact and the evaluation will be made available to the public. By this course of action, we will assure that a thorough assessment is completed prior to release of the contaminated gases and liquids and that the health and safety of the offsite population will be protected.

As a result of releases containing only low or nondetectable levels of radioactivity, the levels of radioactivity in the Susquehanna are indistinguishable from existing background levels at public water supply intakes from the river. These levels have been confirmed by independent measurements made by the NRC, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Commission has recently authorized use of the EPICOR-II water treatment system for processing the waste water stored in tanks in the auxiliary building. This processing will clean up the water to the extent that it will not pose further risk to the public or operations personnel. Before any of the decontaminated water is disposed of, NRC will issue an environmental assessment, which will be made available to the public.

All current information about Three Mile Island and its availability are listed in "Title List of Publicly Available Documents: Three Mile Island - Docket 50-320" (NUREG-0568), and its revision, NUREG-0568, Revision 1. These

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Mr. Richard M. Strout

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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

I am pleased to provide you with this information.

Sincerely,

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Docket 50-289/50-320

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