

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

February 7, 1980
NRC/TMI-80-022

Docket No. 50-320

Mr. R. C. Arnold
Senior Vice President
Metropolitan Edison Company
100 Interpace Parkway
Parsippany, New Jersey 07054

Dear Mr. Arnold:

Subject: Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Building Negative Pressure Requirements

Reference: Met Ed letter, TLL-010, R.F.Wilson to R.H.Vollmer, dated
January 1980

Your request to change the Technical Specification surveillance requirements relative to ventilation flow rates and negative pressure requirements in the Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Buildings has been reviewed by the NRC staff. The revised ventilation flow rates are acceptable, however the staff considers that a relaxation of the surveillance test negative pressure criteria from $-.125$ inches W.G. to $-.025$ inches W.G. will decrease the system's inherent margin of safety in containing potential radioactive releases from the Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Buildings.

Your request states that $-.125$ inches W.G. cannot be maintained during the recovery period because of frequent ingress and egress of personnel and materials. We concur and accept that heavy traffic flow may cause the pressure to increase above $-.125$ inches W.G. periodically. However, the current, more conservative requirements will provide some assurance that during these adverse conditions, pressure in the Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Buildings will remain negative. The current pressure requirements also provide assurance that in the event of accidental radioactive release in the Auxiliary or Fuel Handling Building, with subsequent ventilation system degradation, the system can function to prevent an uncontrolled ground level release even when operating below design conditions. The proposed change in surveillance test requirements will remove this existing safety margin.

In view of the activities scheduled in the Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Buildings, the potential for inadvertent radioactive releases inside the building is significant, and a request which would reduce the buildings' ability to function as a physical barrier against the uncontrolled release of radioactivity is unacceptable and cannot be approved.

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