



~~TOP SECRET~~

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555
June 25, 1980

Docket Nos. 50-259
50-260
and 50-296

Ms. Ruth C. Jurenko
5715 Criner Road
Huntsville, Alabama 35802

Dear Ms. Jurenko:

Reference is made to your letter of April 22, 1980 regarding management of low-level waste at Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. TVA has advised us that "our ultimate objective is to provide for the onsite storage of all low-level radioactive waste generated by each of TVA's nuclear plants and to provide this storage through the plant life." The plan for providing storage for all low-level radioactive waste from all TVA nuclear plants has the following three key points:

1. Design and construct temporary onsite storage facilities, if required.
2. Design and construct permanent (life of the plant) onsite low-level radioactive waste storage facilities at each nuclear plant site.
3. Design and construct low-level radioactive waste volume reduction/solidification facilities at each nuclear plant site.

The first step - design and construction of temporary onsite storage facilities has been completed. In response to TVA's application of January 21, 1980, on March 17, 1980, the staff amended the licenses for Browns Ferry Units 1, 2 and 3 to authorize TVA to store low-level waste onsite for a period of up to two years. The waste to be stored will be primarily dry, compacted trash with low specific activity. The waste will be stored in an existing building, located onsite, which has been modified by the addition of concrete curbs, enclosed sumps, steel grating shield walls, and additional security fencing. By the end of the two year period, TVA is required to remove all the metal drums and containers from the building. Under the provisions of 10 CFR 50.59, TVA has also modified the condenser pullout area adjacent to the east wall of the Unit 3 turbine building to store up to 50 liners containing radioactive spent ion exchange resin. To date, neither of these temporary storage facilities have been used. TVA has been able to ship all low-level waste generated at Browns Ferry to Barnwell, South Carolina for disposal.

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As a Federal agency, TVA is subject to the requirements of NEPA. On February 28, 1980, TVA issued a programmatic environmental assessment on their conceptual low-level radioactive waste management plans for Browns Ferry, including both long-term storage and eventually volume reduction by incineration. The environmental assessment was prepared to obtain project approval from the TVA Board of Directors. We understand that you have copies of this assessment.

As you probably noted from the environmental assessment, to implement the long-range plans, TVA proposes to construct two facilities onsite - a storage facility and a processing facility. The proposed storage building will be used only for storage of low-level waste which is drummed or packaged in the plant. Aside from handling the containers, there will be no processing or treatment of the waste in the storage building. The processing facility would be an addition to the existing Radwaste building and is primarily intended to house a volume reduction and solidification system designed to incinerate low-level waste.

Your letter requested that there be a public hearing and environmental impact statement on the incineration facility. TVA advises us that their proposal schedule is to complete construction of the building by the summer of 1984 and to have the incinerator operational by 1985. Commission Regulations (10 CFR 20.305) specifically require NRC approval for incineration. TVA is evaluating several incinerator designs but they have not requested bids on such equipment. Consequently, no target date has been established by TVA for submission of an application for approval of incineration.

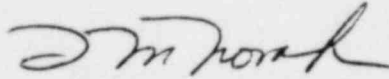
When we receive an application regarding incineration, we expect to publish a notice of proposal action pursuant to §2.105 of the Commission's regulations. In a proceeding involving a licensing action, any person such as yourself who can demonstrate that his or her interest may be affected, can request a hearing. Until we receive an application regarding the incineration facility, it would be premature to decide whether an environmental impact statement or environmental impact appraisal is indicated. We expect to perform an environmental assessment which will determine the form in which the evaluation will be issued.

The principal regulations that would be involved in the design of the facility would be the requirements in the Code of Federal Regulations, 10 CFR Part 20, regarding allowable radiation exposures and effluent releases, 10 CFR Part 30 regarding licensing of byproduct material and

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10 CFR Part 50, Appendix A, General Design Criteria 60 and 64. Copies of these NRC regulations are enclosed. Waste treatment or disposal by incineration is specifically addressed in 10 CFR Part 20.305. Any radioactive releases from waste storage facilities would also have to meet the Environmental Protection Agency requirements in 40 CFR Part 190, as well as the Commission's Appendix I to 10 CFR Part 50.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Novak, Assistant Director
for Operating Reactors
Division of Licensing

Enclosures:

1. 10 CFR Part 20
2. 10 CFR Part 30
3. 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix A
4. 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix I

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American Association of University Women

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April 22, 1980

Mr. Harold R. Denton
Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Mr. Denton:

The purpose of this letter is to request that there be a public hearing and environmental impact statement on the proposed \$71 million low level waste facility for compaction and incineration of low level waste at the TVA Browns Ferry Plant.

The Huntsville branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) has been exploring energy-related issues in a study group called Crosstalk. The members of that group believe that the public, the utility, and the NRC need a public hearing preceded by an environmental impact statement before such a facility is experimentally installed at Browns Ferry.

Would you be kind enough to send us a copy of the NRC regulations which cover the requirements for construction and operation of such a facility?

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Ruth C. Jurenko

(Mrs.) Ruth C. Jurenko
AAUW Crosstalk Chairman

Second Vice-President, Alabama Division AAUW

cc: Commissioners

Mailing Address:
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