

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

DATE: June 29, 1980

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--NRC/TMI-80-37

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received with verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by NRC staff on this date.

Facility: Metropolitan Edison Company
 Three Mile Island, Unit 2
 Middletown, Pennsylvania
 Docket Number 50-320

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
 POOR QUALITY PAGES

Subject: REACTOR BUILDING PURGE STATUS

At approximately 8:00 a.m. on June 23, 1980, purging of the TMI-2 reactor building atmosphere commenced with an initial flow rate of approximately 100 cfm (1.05 Ci/sec) in the Modified Hydrogen Control System (MHC). Approximately 4 minutes into the purging, the system was shutdown due to particulate radiation monitor high alarms on the MHC system (HP-R-229) and the plant ventilation stack (HP-R-219). Subsequent licensee analysis of the monitor sample system filters revealed no particulate activity. It was then concluded that the particulate detectors were responding to the noble gas (Kr 85) concentration in the system. LPA and NRC independent analysis reaffirmed this conclusion. Between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on June 28, 1980, the licensee resumed the purge under test conditions to further evaluate system and associated monitor response with a very slow approach in achieving various MHC system flow rates. Prior to this test, the 219 monitor was modified to eliminate the interference due to noble gas. During the test, additional filter samples were taken with subsequent analysis conducted to reaffirm that no particulate activity concentrations were present. All analyses by the NRC were in agreement with the licensee's results. As a result of this testing, the licensee is considering methods to increase the sensitivity of the stack monitor system for particulates with the installation of additional particulate monitoring equipment. Resumption of testing started at 2:00 p.m. on June 29, 1980, to further evaluate system and associated monitor response.

Additional reports on reactor building purging will be updated on a daily basis during the initial stages of purging. The NRC Region I mobile laboratory will continue to be used to verify the licensee's analytical results.

Media interest has occurred because of public sensitivity to this evolution and TMI related events. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. NRC has responded to inquiries. The NRC/TMI Program Office Staff is monitoring events as they occur on a 24 hour basis.

This preliminary notification is issued for information only, and the information is current as of 2:00 p.m.

Contact: R. J. Conte 590-3950

A. Labano 590-3950

G. T. Collins 590-3955