



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

AUG 14 1980

Mr. John B. West 3rd
3368 Wye Mills South
Laurel, Maryland 20810

Dear Mr. West:

Your letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission about the release of contaminated water from the Three Mile Island nuclear station has been referred to me for response.

Except for releases to the Susquehanna River of liquids containing only low or nondetectable levels of radioactivity, the release of contaminated water is not currently permitted. The Commission has authorized use of the EPICOR-II water treatment system for processing the waste water stored in tanks in the auxiliary building. We do not currently permit the discharge of water processed by the EPICOR-II system. The disposal of the water processed by EPICOR-II will be addressed in the programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) being prepared on the decontamination and disposal of radioactive wastes at Three Mile Island. Copies of the PEIS will be made available for public comment. Metropolitan Edison has not yet submitted a proposal on the disposal method of the decontaminated water.

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.

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 Three Mile Island, but also at all nuclear power plants.

Sincerely,

W J Travers for
Bernard J. Snyder, Program Director
Three Mile Island Program Office
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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