

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

NORRIS, TENNESSEE 37828

215 Natural Resources Building

Mr. James R. Patrick, Jr., Chief  
Compliance Section, Water Enforcement Branch  
Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV  
345 Courtland Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30365

Dear Mr. Patrick:

NOTIFICATION OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS - NPDES PERMIT  
NO. TN0026450 - SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT

Description of the discharge--Discharge 007 - Yard Drainage Pond Discharge.  
Three samples collected on December 22, 1980, had pH values of 9.7, 9.4,  
and 9.2 units, respectively, exceeding the maximum permit limitation of  
9.0 units.

Cause and period of the noncompliance--During treatment of preoperational  
metal cleaning wastes in the unlined chemical cleaning wastes pond, pumps  
were being used to mix the wastes. A valve in the piping was inadvertently  
left open, resulting in the discharge of about 500,000 gallons of the  
15 million gallons in the treatment pond to the yard drainage pond. The  
wastes in the treatment pond had a pH value of 10.9 units at this time and  
this high pH influent to the yard drainage pond caused the noncompliance.  
A yard drainage pond effluent sample collected at 2300, EST, on December 22,  
1980, had a pH value of 8.7 units, so the period of noncompliance was  
probably less than 24 hours.

Steps taken to reduce, eliminate, and prevent recurrence of the noncomplying  
discharge--Plant employees have been instructed to check all valves in the  
recirculation and discharge lines prior to pump operation to ensure that they  
are in the proper position. Samples of the wastes in the unlined chemical  
cleaning wastes pond collected on December 8, 1980, contained the following  
concentrations: pH = 4.7 units, total iron = 1.4 mg/l, total copper = 0.03  
mg/l, phosphorus = 0.14 mg/l, COD = 20 mg/l, oil and grease = <5 mg/l, and  
suspended solids = 14 mg/l. After the pH of the wastes had been raised to  
10.9 units, a sample collected on December 22, 1980, contained 0.34 mg/l of  
total iron. Since the concentrations of these parameters in the wastes  
were low at the time of the inadvertent discharge and the elevated pH only  
lasted for a short period of time, we believe that this discharge had no  
significant environmental impact on the Tennessee River.

Sincerely,

Mohamed T. El-Ashry, Ph.D.  
Director of Environmental Quality

cc: See page 2

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Mr. ~~Jame~~. R. Patrick, Jr.

cc: Tennessee Department of Public Health  
Division of Water Quality Control  
621 Cordell Hull Building  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Mr. Harold E. Denton, Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
7920 Norfolk Avenue  
Washington, DC 20555

Mr. James P. O'Reilly, Director  
Office of Inspection and Enforcement  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Region II - Suite 3300, 101 Marietta Street  
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