

August 15, 1980

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-TMI-80-44

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without 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

Subject: Second entry into TMI Unit 2 Reactor Building

Four men made the second post accident entry into the TMI Unit 2 reactor building at 10:42 A.M., August 15, 1980. The planned duration of the entry was 40 minutes. After approximately 20 minutes inside the Reactor Building, one of the men became physically exhausted and requested to come out. He and another man were directed to exit the reactor building. The two remaining men exited the reactor building at 11:20 a.m. All men were physically exhausted. Exhaustion was attributed to the use of several layers of protective clothing, full face respirator, and 85° F to 90° F temperatures inside the reactor building.

Preliminary measurements, digital and pocket dosimeters, indicate that the maximum total body dose to any member of the entry team was less than 300 mr. The entry team surveyed the 305' elevation (ground level) and the 347' elevation (refueling floor). Gamma readings on the 305' elevation were 400-700 mr per hour in shielded areas. The average gamma readings on the 347' elevation were between 100 and 300 mr per hour. A teletector reading 12' from the reactor head indicated 150 mr.

The entry team energized the reactor building lights and approximately 50% of the lights illuminated. The reactor building sump water was observed to be murky with floating debris. Some electric wires on the 347' elevation were very brittle and crumbled when touched. A standard black telephone was melted and deformed almost beyond recognition. A 55 gallon drum with the top cover still attached was crushed. Numerous rusted surfaces were observed, however the reactor head appeared to be in good condition.

Prior to the four man entry, the reactor building was purged beginning 9:15 a.m. on August 14, 1980, and terminated at 9:25 a.m. on August 15, 1980. Approximately 85 curies were released to the atmosphere. After purging, the building air concentration was less than the MPC in a restricted area (1×10^{-5} uCi/cc) Kr-85.

Bechtel Corporation has been contracted to continue with the work inside the reactor building. The date for the next entry has not been decided.

Media interest has occurred because of licensee issuance of a press release. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. The NRC has not made plans to issue a press release at this time.

This preliminary notification is issued for information only and no further action by the NRC is anticipated.

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The NRC TMI Program Office received notification of this occurrence by monitoring events as they occurred and this information was current as of 2:30 p.m.

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