

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION I  
631 PARK AVENUE  
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406

*K. Alhonte*  
*Prussia*

50-219

JAN 6 1975

New York Public Interest Research Group  
Attention: Mr. M. Alhonte  
1 Columbia Place  
Albany, New York 12207

Dear Mr. Alhonte:

Thank you for your letter of December 1, in which you inquired about the arrival of a spent fuel shipping cask at the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant on November 4, 1975.

On November 5, 1975, officials of the Jersey Central Power and Light Company at the Oyster Creek facility reported via telephone to Region I of the NRC that an empty spent fuel cask had arrived at the site with localized removable surface contamination. Only one of twelve smear results exceeded the level whereby reporting to the NRC is required. This smear exceeded reporting requirement levels by 14%.

Results of our preliminary inquiry into this matter indicate that no health hazard was present either to the driver of the truck or to workers who loaded the empty cask aboard the truck at Nuclear Fuel Services, West Valley, New York, or to personnel offloading the cask at Oyster Creek. The referenced contamination, slightly in excess of reportable limits, was disclosed as a result of routine surveys. Formal inspection findings will be contained in our inspection report following conduct of our next unannounced inspection at the Nuclear Fuel Services facility.

Our evaluation indicates that the contamination found on the surface of the cask did not "put the health of the carrier's drivers in jeopardy," as you indicated in your letter. The cask in question is about 4 feet in diameter, 18 feet long, and has heavy lead shielding to contain both neutron and gamma radiation. Routine checks for both direct radiation and surface contamination including cleaning operations are performed by qualified representatives of both shipper and receiver. Nuclear Fuel Services has informed us that the cask was subjected to high pressure steam cleaning as well as surveyed for direct radiation and surface contamination prior to shipment.



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We have been informed by NFS that the survey of this particular cask showed  $\approx 410\text{dpm}/100\text{cm}^2$  of beta activity,  $<15\text{dpm}/100\text{cm}^2$  on the smears for alpha radiation and that the highest value obtained by any smear was  $1,740\text{dpm}/100\text{cm}^2$  which is well below the reporting requirement of 22,000 dpm. In addition, direct gamma radiation readings around the perimeter of the cask indicated  $<5\text{mr/hr}$  at the surface and  $<1\text{mr/hr}$  at 6'. One location had a reading of 50 mr/hr. If the driver had sat in that cab 24 hours a day every day for a year he would not have absorbed a radiation exposure in excess of the limits provided for in the regulations pertaining to occupational exposures. The latter measurement relates to the radiation environment of the truck driver, in-so-far as his exposure in the cab or walking around the truck for routine inspections was certainly  $<1\text{mr/hr}$ .

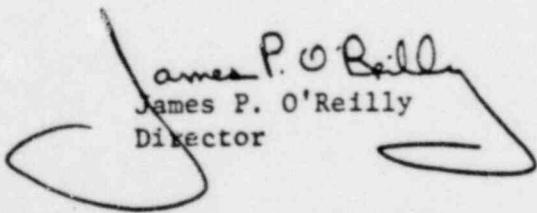
You asked whether NFS reported this "violation" upon sending out the cask, or reported this "violation" when the cask was received from its previous user. No measurements by NFS indicated such a level of contamination as was subsequently found on this cask when it was surveyed at Oyster Creek. We have been assured by NFS that they did clean the cask twice prior to its departure for Oyster Creek.

We are enclosing a copy of the report initially made to Region I by Jersey Central Power and Light Company reporting the smear in question, along with a sketch of the cask. We have also been informed that Jersey Central Power and Light Company has now completed their shipping operations to Nuclear Fuel Services based upon present contract requirements.

When the upcoming inspection of Nuclear Fuel Services has been completed, this inspection report, as is our custom, will be made public. In addition to the copies that we send to the NRC Public Document Room in Washington and to the Public Document Rooms for Nuclear Fuel Services and for Oyster Creek, copies are routinely sent to the States of New Jersey and New York, because the incident involved licensees in those respective states.

If we can be of further help, please let us know.

Sincerely,

  
James P. O'Reilly  
Director