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SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT ☐ 6201 S Street, Box 15830, Sacramento, California 95813; (916) 452-3211

April 14, 1981

R. H. ENGELKEN, DIRECTOR
REGION V OFFICE OF INSPECTION & ENFORCEMENT
U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
1990 NORTH CALIFORNIA BOULEVARD
WALNUT CREEK PLAZA, SUITE 202
WALNUT CREEK CA 94596

OPERATING LICENSE DPR-54
DOCKET NO. 50-312
REPORTABLE OCCURRENCE 81-20

In accordance with Technical Specifications for Rancho Seco Nuclear Generating Station, Appendix B, Section 5.6.2c, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District hereby submits the following written report concerning an Unusual Event which was reported to Mr. H. Canter, resident NRC Inspector, on April 7, 1981.

A monthly review of plant effluent charts indicated that on March 26, 1981, the Technical Specifications limit for plant effluent pH was exceeded. Technical Specifications, Appendix B, Section 2.4 limits the effluent pH to a minimum 6.5 and maximum 8.5. On the date of the occurrence the effluent chart indicated a momentary increase to 8.7. Within 15 minutes the effluent pH had again dropped to below 8.5.

The momentary rise in effluent pH occurred simultaneously with the initiation of a retention basin release. Normally, to preclude a momentary pH spike, the dilution water flow rate is set prior to initiating the basin release. Discussions with operations personnel revealed that on this particular occassion the release was initiated prior to increasing the dilution water flow. This operational error contributed, in part, to possibly having exceeded the Technical Specification limits.

Whether or not the limit was actually exceeded is questionable. The pH of the retention basin prior to release was measured at 8.55. Even without any dilution water the maximum effluent pH would not have reached the recorded value of 8.7. Additionally, nine days after this occurrence the effluent pH monitor started to record outlet pH values ranging from 8.6 to 9.0. At the same time local meters indicated pH values in the 8.1 to 8.3 range, and a grab sample indicated a pH value of 8.2. A

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calibration of the pH instrumentation revealed that the outlet pH was recording between 0.3 and 0.4 pH units high.

At this time the occurrence has been attributed to a combination of operator error and instrumentation error. The Operations Supervisor is informing all operating personnel of this occurrence and emphasizing the necessity of establishing dilution water flow prior to initiating a retention basin release. The effluent pH instrumentation has been calibrated and is presently being closely monitored to determine the error band and amount of instrument drift associated with the equipment.

There were no plant transients nor power reductions associated with this event.

John J. Mattimoe

John J. Mattimoe
Assistant General Manager
and Chief Engineer

cc: I&E Washington (30)
MIPC (3)
EPRI-NSAC