

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

Date: 4/20/81

Chief ~~Document~~ Management Branch

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF SAFEGUARDS EVENT - PNS-III-81- 07

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 IE staff as of this date.

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FACILITY: COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY
Docket Nos. 50-373; 50-374
LaSalle Units 1 and 2
LaSalle County, Illinois

SUBJECT: SUSPICIOUS FIRE

At approximately 7:15 a.m. (CST) on April 20, 1981, a fire in a cable tray riser which runs from the Cable Spreading Room to the Auxiliary Electric room was detected by the installed alarm system. The fire damaged several safety related instrument cables before being extinguished by onsite fire personnel. There were no personnel injuries. An examination of the cable tray by the licensee showed what appeared to be the residue of a petroleum product and some charred cardboard. Based on the circumstances (location and initial findings), the licensee considers the nature of the fire to be suspicious, although a specific cause is not known at this time. The licensee also noted that on April 13, 1981, a small fire was discovered in a non-safety related switchgear cabinet that appeared to have been caused by burning "blueprints" which were found in the cabinet.

The licensee has initiated an investigation and has collected samples of the "petroleum product" for analysis. The State Fire Marshall has been notified and a representative will be onsite on April 21, 1981.

The licensee is making a press release; Region III (Chicago) does not plan to issue a press release. The FBI (Chicago) has been notified and the State of Illinois will be notified. The IAT was notified.

The LaSalle facility is under construction. Unit 1 is approximately 99 percent complete and Unit 2 is approximately 86 percent complete. Fuel is stored onsite but was not affected by the fire.



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Region III received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the Resident Inspector at approximately 9:00 a.m. (CST), April 20, 1981. This information is current as of 3:30 p.m. (CST) on April 20, 1981. This PN is issued for information only. Region III will monitor the licensee's and State Fire Marshall's investigations.

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