

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

~~Docket, 5~~  
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Date: June 8, 1981

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-III-81-538

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: General Electric - Morris Operation  
Morris, Illinois  
Docket No. 70-1308

and

Dairyland Power Cooperative - LACBWR  
LaCrosse, Wisconsin  
Docket No. 50-409



SUBJECT: CONTAMINATED SPENT FUEL CASK - UPDATE

A temporary amendment to the certificate (license) for the NAC-1D cask, permitting the cask to be covered with plastic to prevent surface contamination levels exceeding the DOT limit of 22,000 dpm/100 cm<sup>2</sup> was issued by NMSS on June 4, 1981. A second Immediate Action Letter (IAL) was issued on June 5, 1981, by Region III (Chicago) to allow the cask to be returned to GE-Morris. The IAL required travel during daylight hours, the use of a "chase car," and periodic checks of the package integrity during transport of the empty cask from LACBWR to GE-Morris.

On arrival of the cask at GE-Morris on June 5, no removable contamination was detected on the outer surface of the plastic cover. Maximum contamination levels on the cask surface and the inner surface of the plastic were slightly above 22,000 dpm/100 cm<sup>2</sup> in a few spots, but average surface contamination did not exceed 3,000 dpm/100 cm<sup>2</sup>. The cask was loaded with two fuel assemblies, decontaminated, covered with plastic, and returned to LACBWR on June 7. No contamination was detected on the outer plastic surface, and the maximum level reported on the cask surface was about 9,500 dpm/100 cm<sup>2</sup>. The shipment was the fourth and final transfer of fuel from GE-Morris to LACBWR.

The empty cask is scheduled to be transported to Battelle Columbus Laboratories on June 8. The cask will again be covered with plastic.

Region III is continuing to pursue the reasons for contamination levels measured on the cask. Subsequent findings and recommendations will be provided to IE Headquarters and NMSS.

The States of Illinois and Wisconsin and the DOT are being notified. Neither licensee plans a press release. Dairyland Power Cooperative previously notified news media of the contamination problem. Region III is responding to follow-up news inquiries.

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There has been some news media interest in the Morris and LaCrosse areas. A small group of demonstrators was at the Morris site on June 6 and 7 but was not present for either the arrival or departure of the cask.

A Region III inspector was on site at GE-Morris Operation on June 5, 6, and 7 to observe activities involving the cask. The Resident Inspectors at LACBWR observed the cask departure on June 5 and arrival on June 7. This information is current as of 11:00 a.m., June 8, 1981.

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