



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV  
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000  
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011

March 6, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Those Listed Below

FROM: G. L. Madsen, Chief, Reactor Projects Branch, RIV

SUBJECT: IE BULLETIN NO. 81-01, REV. 1

Subject IE Bulletin has been sent to the following licensees. A copy is attached for your information.

Arkansas Power & Light Company  
ANO-1 & 2 (50-313, 50-368)

Nebraska Public Power District  
Cooper Nuclear Station (50-298)

Omaha Public Power District  
Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station (50-285)

Public Service Company of Colorado  
Fort St. Vrain (50-267)

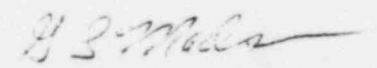
Gulf State Utilities  
River Bend (50-458; 50-459)

Houston Lighting & Power Company  
South Texas (50-498; 50-499)

Kansas Gas & Electric Company  
Wolf Creek (STN 50-482)

Louisiana Power & Light Company  
Waterford 3 (50-382)

Texas Utilities Generating Company  
Comanche Peak (50-445; 50-446)

  
G. L. Madsen, Chief  
Reactor Projects Branch

Attachment:  
As stated

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UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

DUPLICATE

IE Bulletin No. 81-01

January 27, 1981

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SURVEILLANCE OF MECHANICAL SNUBBERS

Description of Circumstances:

Several instances of failures of mechanical snubbers supplied by International Nuclear Safeguards Corporation (INC) have been identified that indicate possible deficiencies in these snubbers. A summary of the failures that have occurred is provided below:

1. On August 9, 1974, the Tennessee Valley Authority submitted event report BFAO-50-260/741W identifying 11 of 14 INC Model MSVA-1A snubbers that were found inoperable on Browns Ferry Nuclear Power Station Unit 2 and subsequently identified 5 of 14 inoperable units on Browns Ferry Nuclear Power Unit No 3. All of these units were found to be frozen, and the cause was attributed to a failure to lubricate the parts during assembly. The failed snubbers were replaced with new units produced by the same manufacturer.
2. On April 12, 1976, the St. Lucie Plant Unit 1 facility of Florida Power and Light Company submitted event report No. 50-335-76-9 wherein five INC Model MSVA-1 snubbers were identified as inoperable because they were found to be frozen. The failures were caused by oxidation on the internals and by improper assembly. All INC mechanical snubbers were replaced with units produced by another manufacturer.
3. On April 8, 1977, Iowa Electric Light and Power Company submitted event report No. 77-23 for the Duane Arnold Energy Center facility that identified 13 INC Model 1MSVA-1 Type AS snubbers to be frozen; the cause of failure was attributed to large amounts of interior oxidation. The units were replaced with those produced by another manufacturer.
4. On December 5, 1979, personnel from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission visited Department of Energy (DOE) facilities at Richland, Washington, to obtain information on DOE experience with INC snubbers at the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF). The DOE-owned FFTF was equipped with more than 4,000 mechanical pipe restraints (snubbers) supplied by INC. In 1978, FFTF examined more than 800 of these mechanical snubbers by removing them from their installation and found that 43, or about 5% of those examined, were frozen. The plant was still under construction so the snubbers had seen no service and had been subjected to only normal construction environments for 1 to 2 years.