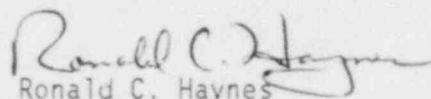


Gentlemen:

The enclosed Information Notice 81-34, "Accidental Actuation of Prompt Public Notification System", is forwarded to you for information. No written response is required. If you desire additional information regarding this matter, please contact this office.

Sincerely,


Ronald C. Haynes
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: IE Information Notice No. 81-34 with 1 Attachment

CONTACT: B. Bores
(215) 337-5213



IE-31
IE31
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8111270310 811125
PDR ADOCK 05000003
Q PDR

SSINS No.: 6835
Accession No.:
8107230038
IN 81-34

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

November 16, 1981

IE INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 81-34: ACCIDENTAL ACTUATION OF PROMPT PUBLIC
NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Description of Circumstances:

Recently the Maine Yankee prompt notification system was inadvertently activated. The Maine Yankee system consists of three subsystems, one of which uses radio controlled fixed sirens to alert the public to the existence of a regional emergency. The regional emergency signal, which would be used in the event of an emergency at Maine Yankee or any other type of regional emergency requiring public notification, can be activated by Maine Yankee plant personnel, by the county Sheriff, and by the State Police. In a regional emergency, all fixed sirens are activated simultaneously by a single radio signal carrying a two-tone sequential command encoded at the transmitter and decoded at each siren's radio receiver. The public has been instructed that when they hear the regional emergency alert signal, they should tune in the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) and/or the local National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) station to get information about the nature of the emergency and what they are to do.

The fixed sirens can develop more than one sound. In addition to a common regional emergency sound, each siren can also produce a different, distinctive sound which is used by local fire companies to signal a fire. The controls for fire calls are independent of the regional alert control.

Recently the fixed sirens were activated three times in rapid succession by radio signals generated by the State Police in the course of routine police radio pager operations not connected with a regional emergency.

For a time neither Maine Yankee personnel, the county Sheriff, nor the State Police realized that the regional emergency signal had been triggered. No emergency instructions or announcements were broadcast to the public via EBS or NOAA, so some concerned citizens telephoned the plant and the State Police for further information. In all, about one hour elapsed between the first siren system activation and the first media announcement indicating no emergency existed.

Since this event, the State Police, who have the authority to activate EBS and NOAA, have developed "no emergency" messages and procedures which can be quickly aired should another emergency signal be produced in the absence of an emergency. They have also altered their radio operations plan to assure an offending signal will not be generated. Maine Yankee has altered the tone sequencing scheme to render it unlike tone sequences typical of commercially

available paging systems. These steps will reduce the likelihood of a recurrence and provide for rapid announcements to the public over EBS stations and NOAA weather radio in the event a "no emergency" message is needed. Thus, the "no emergency" message will reach the public in the same way emergency instructions would, and just as rapidly. These are interim steps.

In the longer term, an encoded digital message will be used to activate the sirens. This offers far more security than the sequenced tone system it will replace. The "no emergency" announcement capability will be retained.

This information notice is provided to make licensees and applicants aware of this event and its associated problems. We expect that licensees will review this information for applicability at their facilities.

No written response to this information notice is required. If additional information is desired regarding this matter, please contact the Director of the appropriate NRC Regional Office.

Attachment:
Recently issued IE Information Notices

RECENTLY ISSUED
IE INFORMATION NOTICES

Information Notice No.	Subject	Date Issued	Issued to
81-33	Locking Devices Inadequately Installed on Main Steam Isolation Valves	11/9/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-32	Transfer and/or Disposal of Spent Generators	10/23/81	All holders of material licenses as designated by IE
81-31	Failure of Safety Injection Valves to Operate Against Differential Pressure	10/8/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-30	Velan Swing Check Valves	9/28/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-29	Equipment Qualification Testing Experience	9/24/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-28	Failure of Rockwell-Edward Main Steam Isolation Valves	9/3/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-27	Flammable Gas Mixtures in the Waste Gas Decay Tanks in PWR Plants	9/3/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP
81-26	Compilation of Health Physics Related Information Items	8/28/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP, Research Reactor, Fuel Facilities and Priority Material License
81-25	Open Equalizing Valve of Differential Pressure Transmitted Causes Reactor Scram and Loss of Redundant Safety Signals	8/24/81	All holders of a power reactor OL or CP

LIST OF HOLDERS OF NUCLEAR POWER REACTOR OPERATING
LICENSES AND CONSTRUCTION PERMITS RECEIVING
IE INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 81-34

✓ Baltimore Gas and Electric Company ATTN: Mr. A. E. Lundvall, Jr. Vice President, Supply P. O. Box 1475 Baltimore, Maryland 21203	Docket Nos. 50-317- 50-318
✓ Boston Edison Company M/C Nuclear ATTN: Mr. A. V. Morisi Nuclear Operations Support Manager 800 Boylston Street Boston, Massachusetts 02199	Docket No. 50-293-
✓ Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company ATTN: Mr. W. G. Council Vice President - Nuclear Engineering and Operations P. O. Box 270 Hartford, Connecticut 06101	Docket No. 50-213-
✓ Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. ATTN: Mr. John D. O'Toole Vice President - Nuclear Engineering and Quality Assurance 4 Irving Place New York, New York 10003	Docket Nos. 50-03 - 50-247-
✓ Duquesne Light Company ATTN: Mr. J. J. Carey Vice President Nuclear Division P. O. Box 4 Shippingport, Pennsylvania 15077	Docket No. 50-334-
✓ Jersey Central Power and Light Company ATTN: Mr. Philip R. Clark Vice President - Nuclear GPU Nuclear 100 Interpace Parkway Parsippany, New Jersey 07054	Docket No. 50-219-

✓ Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company
 ATTN: Mr. Robert H. Groce
 Senior Engineer-Licensing
 1671 Worcester Road
 Framingham, Massachusetts 01701

Docket No. 50-309-

✓ Metropolitan Edison Company
 ATTN: Mr. H. D. Hukill
 Vice President and Director of TMI-1
 P. O. Box 480
 Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057

Docket No. 50-289-

✓ Metropolitan Edison Company
 ATTN: Mr. J. J. Barton
 Acting Vice President and
 Director of TMI-2
 P. O. Box 480
 Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057

Docket No. 50-320-

✓ Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
 ATTN: Mr. T. E. Lempges
 Vice President
 Nuclear Generation
 300 Erie Boulevard West
 Syracuse, New York 13202

Docket No. 50-220-

✓ Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
 ATTN: Mr. W. G. Counsil
 Senior Vice President - Nuclear
 Engineering and Operations Group
 P. O. Box 270
 Hartford, Connecticut 06101

Docket Nos. 50-336-
 50-245-
 50-423-

✓ Philadelphia Electric Company
 ATTN: Mr. S. L. Daltroff
 Vice President
 Electric Production
 2301 Market Street
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101

Docket Nos. 50-277-
 50-278-

✓ Power Authority of the State of New York
 Indian Point 3 Nuclear Power Plant
 ATTN: Mr. J. C. Brons
 Resident Manager
 P. O. Box 215
 Buchanan, New York 10511

Docket No. 50-286-

✓ Power Authority of the State of New York
 James A. FitzPatrick Nuclear Power Plant
 ATTN: Mr. John D. Leonard
 Resident Manager
 P. O. Box 41
 Lycoming, New York 13093

Docket No. 50-333-

✓ Public Service Electric and Gas Company
 ATTN: Mr. F. W. Schneider
 Vice President - Production
 80 Park Plaza - 15A
 Newark, New Jersey 07101

Docket Nos. 50-272-
 50-311-

✓ Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation
 ATTN: Mr. John E. Maier
 Vice President
 Electric and Steam Production
 89 East Avenue
 Rochester, New York 14649

Docket No. 50-244-

✓ Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
 ATTN: Mr. Robert L. Smith
 Licensing Engineer
 1671 Worcester Road
 Framingham, Massachusetts 01701

Docket No. 50-271-

✓ Yankee Atomic Electric Company
 ATTN: Mr. James A. Kay
 Senior Engineer-Licensing
 1671 Worcester Road
 Framingham, Massachusetts 01701

Docket No. 50-29-

✓ Duquesne Light Company
 ATTN: Mr. E. J. Woolever
 Vice President
 436 Sixth Avenue
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

Docket No. 50-412-

✓ Jersey Central Power & Light Company
 ATTN: Mr. J. T. Carroll
 Acting Director
 Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station
 P. O. Box 388
 Forked River, New Jersey 08731

Docket No. 50-363-

✓ Long Island Lighting Company
 ATTN: Mr. M. S. Pollock
 Vice President - Nuclear
 175 East Old Country Road
 Hicksville, New York 11801

Docket No. 50-322-

✓ Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
 ATTN: Mr. Gerald K. Rhode
 Vice President
 System Project Management
 c/o Miss Catherine R. Seibert
 300 Erie Boulevard, West
 Syracuse, NY 13202

Docket No. 50-410✓

✓ Pennsylvania Power & Light Company
 ATTN: Mr. Norman W. Curtis
 Vice President
 Engineering and Construction - Nuclear
 2 North Ninth Street
 Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

Docket Nos. 50-387✓
 50-388✓

✓ Philadelphia Electric Company
 ATTN: Mr. John S. Kemper
 Vice President
 Engineering and Research
 2301 Market Street
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101

Docket Nos. 50-352✓
 50-353✓

✓ Public Service Electric & Gas Company
 ATTN: Mr. T. J. Martin
 Vice President
 Engineering and Construction
 80 Park Plaza - 17C
 Newark, New Jersey 07101

Docket Nos. 50-354✓
 50-355✓

✓ Public Service Company of New Hampshire
 ATTN: Mr. W. C. Tallman
 Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
 1000 Elm Street
 Manchester, New Hampshire 03105

Docket Nos. 50-443✓
 50-444✓