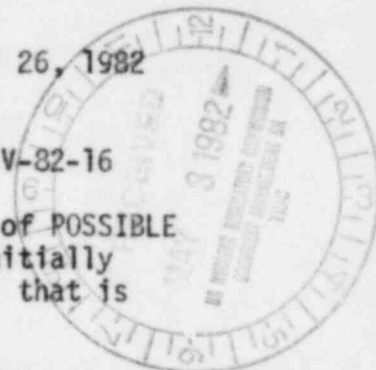


April 26, 1982



PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-82-16

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by NRC staff on this date.

FACILITY: Public Service Company of Colorado
Fort St. Vrain
Platteville, Colorado
Docket: 50-267

Licensee Emergency Classification:
 Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: UNPLANNED RELEASE OF RADIOACTIVE GASES

The reactor was operating at approximately one-half percent power and Loop 2 had been shut down in preparation for maintenance. At 6:02 a.m. (MDT), a circulator bearing water upset occurred on Loop 1 causing a loop shutdown. The reactor was manually scrammed. At the same time, a differential pressure between the helium and the water in the bearing water system forced Radioactive Coolant (Helium) down one of the shafts and resulted in an unplanned release of radioactive gases into the Reactor Building. The background activity prior to the release was 2.6E-10 uCi/cc before the system upset. The maximum activity level in the building following the release was 6.09E-9 uCi/cc. There was also a small release from the Reactor Building through the stack of 631 uCi of Noble gases. No indication of a release of iodine was indicated on any of the stack monitors. None were above the Technical Specification limits of 1.34E-4 uCi/cc and 3.0E-10 uCi/cc for Noble gases and iodine, respectively. Levels within the Reactor Building returned to background at 8:00 a.m. (MDT).

The reactor will remain shut down for maintenance on control rod 19, for investigation of possible effects of moisture on the reserve shutdown system, and for blanking of a leaking PCRV liner cooling water subheader tube.

No significant personnel contamination or radiation exposure resulted. The State of Colorado was notified.

Media interest was anticipated. Licensee is making a press release.

The Fort St. Vrain plant is a high temperature gas cooled reactor.

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