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 TMI Site R/F
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Docket No. 50-320

OCT 21 1980

Ms. Anna E. Wasserbach, Chairman
 N.Y. Federation for Safe Energy
 Box 2308 W. Saugerties Road
 Saugerties, N.Y. 12477

Dear Ms. Wasserbach:

Your letter to Mr. Denton regarding the release of radioactive noble gases during the March 28, 1979 accident at Three Mile Island Unit-2 and the adequacy of the environmental monitoring program during the recently completed purge of the reactor building was referred to me for response.

In your letter you expressed concern that increased radiation levels in the Albany, N.Y. area during the accident were not due to "Xenon only", but in fact could be attributed to Krypton-85. At the time of the accident the inventory of Krypton-85 in the reactor core was small when compared with the other noble gases. Krypton-85 was not released in any significant quantities because of the relatively small amount available for release. Radiological measurements made of radionuclide distribution in the waste gas tanks, of the gases in the containment building, and the noble gas concentrations in the environment confirmed that the principal radionuclide released was Xenon-133. The staff's best estimate of the noble gases released during the accident include: 1.5×10^6 Ci of Xe-133, 0.35×10^6 Ci of Kr-88, 0.28×10^6 Ci of Xe-135, 0.21×10^6 Ci of Xe-133m, and 0.01×10^6 Ci of Xe-135m.

In my letter to you dated June 26, 1980, detailed information related to the environmental monitoring program during the purge of the TMI-2 reactor building was provided in Section 8.0 of NUREG-0662. The program description explains that the EPA operated a network of 18 continuous air-monitoring stations during the purge at radial distances from 0.5 miles to 7 miles from TMI. Due to the rapid dispersion of the Krypton gas in the atmosphere, seven miles was established as the point well beyond that which EPA expected to detect any emissions from TMI-2. Thus, there was no perceived need or benefit from monitoring at greater distances or from regional monitoring during the purge.

I trust that this information adequately responds to your concerns.

Sincerely,

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
 POOR QUALITY PAGES

H

Bernard J. Snyder, Program Director
 TMI Program Office
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

OFFICE	▶ TMIPO:NRR	▶ TMIPO:NRR			
SURNAME	▶ RMeiler:cap	▶ BJSnyder			
DATE	▶ 10/21/80	▶ 10/ /80			

Sept. 12, 1980

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Denton:

Thank you for your informative letter of Aug. 12, 1980 and enclosures.

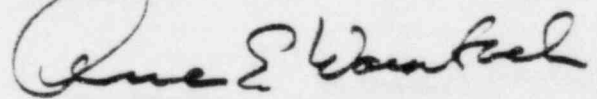
You stated that the radiation levels in Albany, N.Y. at the time of the Three Mile Accident in March, 1979, were due to Xenon-133 and Xenon-135, with a half-life of 5.3 and days, and 9.2 hours respectively. I take exception to this. Since no monitoring is done for KR 85 routinely in N.Y. as it passes right through the filters, and since krypton has well-documented biological effects, the NRC cannot maintain that the radiation readings were due to Xenon only, or that there were no adverse health effects associated with levels detected in Albany, as none were measured.

As for the venting that the NRC approved for June 1980, you should have done regional monitoring, as KR 85 levels have already more than tripled in the atmosphere since 1962, the height of nuclear atmospheric testing, and before the extended proliferation of nuclear facilities throughout the U.S. and world.

I can understand the precarious balance the NRC must obtain in the clean-up of TMI versus no action, but you must also remember your actions are adding cumulatively to the environmental pollution already existing from nuclear facilities and activities. The EPA "background" radiation figures are just so much pacification for the unsuspecting public, in that background radiation includes both natural and man-made radiation, and therefore, ^{is} NOT something humans have lived with for eons. And while geneticists have KNOWN, since at least the turn of the century, that radiation causes mutations, the experts still maintain there is an acceptable level of radiation exposure, without knowing collectively, or individually, WHAT that level is. All the while the environmental levels keep going up.

Cancer is at an epidemic level and you should keep in mind that releases and exposures to workers and/or the public are not measured in curies or millirems, but in human health and tragedy.

Sincerely,



Anna E. Wasserbach, MRS

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