



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

August 20, 1990

Docket No. 50-245

Mr. Edward J. Mrocza  
Senior Vice President  
Nuclear Engineering and Operations  
Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company  
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company  
P.O. Box 270  
Hartford, Connecticut 06141-0270

Dear Mr. Mrocza:

SUBJECT: REQUESTED DELAY OF DECISION TO INSTALL HARDENED WETWELL VENT  
FOR MILLSTONE NUCLEAR POWER STATION UNIT 1 (TAC NO. 74872)

On September 1, 1989, the NRC staff issued Generic Letter 89-16, "Installation of a Hardened Wetwell Vent," requesting that Mark I containment utilities, within 45 days, volunteer to install a hardened wetwell vent. For utilities not electing to voluntarily incorporate changes, the Commission directed the staff to perform plant-specific backfit analyses. In your letter dated October 30, 1989, you stated that you would not commit to make voluntary modifications to harden the wetwell vent until completion of the Individual Plant Examination (IPE); that evaluation in the Integrated Safety Assessment Program process would be utilized to develop the implementation priority of any justifiable modifications; and that plant-specific design details, if warranted, would be developed in parallel with the IPE.

The NRC letter dated January 22, 1990, informed you that since you do not intend to install the hardened vent on a voluntary basis at this time, the staff would complete a plant-specific analysis for the Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 1. If the completed analysis supported the conclusion that modifications meet the requirements of the NRC backfit rule, a copy of the NRC staff analysis would be sent to you to provide you with another opportunity to make the modifications under the provisions of 10 CFR 50.59. The NRC letter dated June 15, 1990, transmitted the staff's backfit analysis and the staff's conclusion based on the analysis that the backfit is justified for Millstone, Unit No. 1.

At your request, on July 24, 1990, you and other owners of plants with isolation condensers who had not volunteered to install a hardened wetwell vent met with the NRC staff to provide additional information to support your request that the recommended improvement be evaluated as part of the IPE program; and that a decision to install the vent be delayed until completion of the IPE program (mid-December 1990).

After careful consideration of the additional supporting information provided regarding the isolation condenser plants, the staff continues to believe that Millstone, Unit No. 1 and the other similar plants should proceed without delay with the installation of the hardened wetwell vents. Our decision to proceed is based, in part, on the importance of the venting sequences and their role in

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Mr. Edward J. Mroccka  
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company

Millstone Nuclear Power Station  
Unit No. 1

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mitigating a large radiological release. Many of these sequences are applicable to Millstone, Unit No. 1 since the isolation condenser could not be assured to be operable/available for these sequences. Examples of events leading to these sequences include stuck open SRV transients as well as the complete spectrum of primary system pipe ruptures. Under these depressurized conditions, the isolation condenser is not expected to function. Therefore venting is necessary under these conditions to maintain decay heat removal capability and minimize challenges to the containment.

Millstone, Unit No. 1 has Emergency Operating Procedures (EOPs) which call for venting of the containment for a wide range of plant conditions. The venting procedures and pathway should be as reliable as possible to assure that the operators will be able to carry out the EOP instructions. To this end the operator should not be faced with the potential of further plant damage or possible radiological impacts on personnel when venting is a consideration. Therefore, we view the hardening of the pathway as an important step in reducing the negative consequences of venting. Based on the above, our discussions during the July 24, 1990 meeting, and our preliminary review of your August 8, 1990 letter, we still conclude that the results of our backfit analysis remain valid. We believe that proceeding without delay with the installation of the hardened wetwell vent is a prudent course of action.

Accordingly, we will be initiating an Order based on the staff's backfit analysis directing you to implement the hardened vent at Millstone 1, unless we receive a commitment from you within two weeks from the date of this letter that you will voluntarily install a hardened vent capability at Millstone 1.

Our Order will include the results of our review of your August 8, 1990 letter.

Sincerely,

Original signed by  
James G. Partlow

James G. Partlow  
Associate Director for Projects  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: See next page

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\*See previous concurrences in Oyster Creek letter.

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