



UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC STAFF DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT FOR DECONTAMINATION OF THREE MILE ISLAND 2 ISSUED FOR COMMENT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued for public comment a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement relating to decontamination and disposal of radioactive wastes at Unit 2 of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Station.

The Commission, in a policy statement of November 1979, directed the staff to prepare a programmatic statement on environmental issues and alternatives as a means of involving the public in its decision-making process before commitments to specific cleanup choices are made.

In the draft statement, the NRC staff evaluated the environmental impacts of alternative methods for complete decontamination of TMI-2, fuel removal and decontamination of the coolant system, and disposition of the resulting radioactive wastes.

The staff concluded that existing methods are adequate, or can be suitably modified, to perform all the necessary operations with only minimal releases of radioactivity. The staff found the following principal environmental impacts that would result from the cleanup:

--Cumulative whole body doses to any individual off site exposed to gaseous and liquid releases should not exceed 1.6 millirem, a dose much less than design objectives of NRC regulations. The risk that this dose would cause a cancer death over the lifetime of the individual who received it is about 2.2 in 10 million.

--The total work force performing decontamination tasks will receive a cumulative radiation dose estimated at between 2,700 and 12,000 person-rem. Health effects corresponding to these doses range from 0.3 to 1.6 additional deaths due to cancer and 0.7 to 3 additional genetic effects.

--Contaminated liquids can be processed by several alternative water treatment systems which are being considered and, after suitable dilution, the processed water could be released to the Susquehanna River without adverse environmental impact.

--Although the number of truck shipments necessary to carry solid radioactive wastes to disposal sites will be large (ranging from 660 to 1,700), radiation doses from each shipment to those along the shipping route will be small. An individual onlooker who spends three minutes at an average distance of three feet from a truck in transit might receive a dose of up to 1.3 millirem.

--Low levels of stress will probably continue among some members of the community who feared accidental releases of radioactive krypton gas from the containment atmosphere, but no long-term psychological effects on the great majority of the people are anticipated.

The staff also estimated that completion of the cleanup operation would take five to seven years from the initial start in April 1979.

The staff further determined that temporary storage of certain radioactive waste materials at the TMI site will be required until suitable disposal sites and governing regulations are established. However, no significant environmental effects are expected from this storage activity.

Since the precise condition of the reactor core or reactor building is not known, the staff has described and assessed probable or bounding situations. When more information becomes available, supplements to the draft statement will be issued if the affected operations are found to be significantly changed.

The draft statement, designated NUREG-0683, is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., and at the TMI-2 Local Public Document Rooms at the Government Publications Section, State Library of Pennsylvania, Education Building, Commonwealth and Walnut Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the York College of Pennsylvania, Country Club Road, York. Copies of the statement have been circulated to Federal and state agencies for comment.

Requests for single copies of the draft statement should be addressed in writing to the Director, Division of Technical Information and Document Control, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555.

Comments on the draft statement should be addressed to the attention of the Director, Three Mile Island Program Office, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. Comments are due by October 6. Only comments of a non-proprietary nature, which can be disclosed to the public, should be submitted.

After analysis of the comments, the staff will prepare a Final Programmatic Statement and the Commission will then determine the appropriate action to be taken.

The summary and conclusions of the draft statement are attached.

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Attachment