

NOV 18 1982

The Honorable Bill Goodling
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Goodling:

This responds to your letter of October 18, 1982 wherein you forwarded an October 15, 1982 letter from Kathy and Scott Conner of York, Pennsylvania, expressing concern over one of the sirens used as part of the prompt public notification system for the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant.

Following the accident at Three Mile Island, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission established a program to upgrade criteria for emergency preparedness around nuclear power plants. One provision of this program was to provide for alerting the public through the use of a prompt public notification system (e.g., sirens). The NRC regulations were developed to require that the prompt public notification system have the capability to essentially complete the initial notification of the public within 10 miles of the plant within about 15 minutes. Metropolitan Edison Company, in cooperation with local officials, subsequently determined that a siren system was the desired method to meet this requirement and initiated a study to determine the type and location of the sirens. Some of the factors considered in this study were population distribution, attenuation of the signal and existing electrical power hookups. Siren locations were selected in cooperation with each local county government and a field verification test was performed. A recent test determined that the siren sound levels did not exceed the Occupational and Safety Health Administration noise exposure standards.

In addition to the Conners' concern over sound level, they stated that the siren is usually tested the first Monday of every month. It is our understanding that some local jurisdictions who intend to use the sirens for public warning in situations other than a reactor accident (e.g., fires or floods), have chosen to test the sirens more frequently than that recommended by the NRC (annually).

The NRC is sensitive to the Conners' predicament. However, our regulations only set forth the requirement for the utility to have the capability to alert the public. It is then up to the utility to work with the State and local government to ensure coverage of the 10 mile radius around the site. At this point we suggest the Conners take this issue up with local county officials to determine whether movement of the sirens could reduce local impacts while still achieving adequate coverage of the area. Recent evaluation of the Three Mile Island siren system showed that the system, as installed, achieves the alerting objectives for which it was intended. While the NRC has the responsibility for ensuring the safe operation of the plant and adequate emergency preparedness for onsite areas, the emergency preparedness for offsite areas is

the responsibility of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Consequently, we are forwarding a copy of the Connors' letter to FEMA requesting that they consider this matter in their review and evaluation of the prompt public notification system for Three Mile Island.

I trust this is responsive to your constituents' concern.

Sincerely,

William J. Dircks
Executive Director for Operations

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*See previous concurrence

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No. 1038

Logging Date 10/19/82

NRC SECRETARIAT

- TO: Commissioner _____ Date _____
- Exec. Dir./Oper. Gen. Counsel
- Cong. Liaison Solicitor
- Public Affairs Secretary
- _____ Inspector & Auditor
- _____ Policy Evaluation

Incoming: Rep Bill Goodling, Const Ref

From: Kathy & Scott Conner

To: OCA Date 10/18/82

Subject: TMI warning siren

- Prepare reply for signature of:
- Chairman
 - Commissioner _____
 - EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY, IA, PE
 - Signature block omitted
 - _____
 - Return original of incoming with response

For direct reply* Suspense: Oct 28

For appropriate action

For information

Rec'd Off. EDO
 Date 10-20-82
 Time 8:15

docket

Remarks: _____

For the Commission: billie

*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Correspondence and Records Branch

FROM Rep. Bill Goodling	ACTION CONTROL	DATES	CONTROL NO.
	COMPL DEADLINE	11/3/82	12400
TO Kasmerer	INTERIM REPLY		DATE OF DOCUMENT 10/19/82
	FINAL REPLY	<i>1/1/83</i>	PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF:
	FILE LOCATION	11/18/82	<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OTHER: _____

DESCRIPTION LETTER MEMO REPORT OTHER
**Encloses ltr fm Kathy & Scott Conner re
 TNI warning siren**

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS
Sent to EDO 11/18/82 jcd

SECY-82-1038

ASSIGNED TO	DATE	INFORMATION ROUTING
DeYoung, IE	10/20/82	@Cunningham LUnderwood
	<i>10/21</i>	<i>for Young &...</i>