

July 20, 1994

Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Secretary of the Commission, NRC  
Washington D.C. 20555

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USNRC Morro Bay, Ca.  
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Attn: Docketing + Service Branch

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BRANCH

Gentlemen:

The San Luis Obispo Telegram Tribune printed an article a week ago about relaxing the rules on drug testing of employees working at nuclear power plants. The local union of our nearby Diablo Canyon plant (about 14 miles as the crow flies), asks the NRC to limit random drug testing to employees working in vital areas of the plants.

Our feeling is that to test all employees who enter protected areas escorted or unescorted and also for employees for firms contracted with Pacific Gas + Elec Co.

The enclosed article stresses the point that security should be strengthened at PGE's Diablo Canyon plant and no doubt this could apply to all nuclear power plants. The risks are enormous.

Yours truly  
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# SLO County

## Drug probe reaches Diablo

By Dave Wilcox  
Telegram-Tribune

AVILA BEACH — A former Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant employee told authorities investigating a Los Osos physician that her supervisor sold prescription painkillers from the trunk of his car in the plant's parking lot.

Lisa Opperman also told an investigator that the same supervisor, Robert McVicker, brought the drugs into the plant and sold them to her.

Opperman is among witnesses interviewed during a state Consumer Affairs investigation of Los Osos physician Rumi Lakha, who's facing trial for criminal charges including illegally prescribing narcotics and insurance fraud.



Her statements are included in a 52-page report written by Senior Investigator Blair Sims that's filed in court.

Sims' report states he told John Jones, director of security for Diablo Canyon's owner, Pacific Gas and Electric Co., about Opperman's allegations.

Shawn Cooper, a spokesman for Diablo Canyon, said company offi-

cial conducted an internal investigation of the allegations.

"Our internal investigation concluded that there was a very small number of employees involved." He said he couldn't say exactly how many for privacy reasons.

Cooper said neither McVicker nor Opperman continue to work at the plant. He said Opperman worked for a firm that contracted with Pacific Gas and Electric Co.

"The company takes it very seriously," Cooper said of alleged drug abuse. "Any employees that are found using drugs will be taken care of. We don't take this lightly."

Opperman overdosed while working at Diablo Canyon on Aug. 19, 1993 and was taken to French Hospital Medical Center, according to a

hospital emergency room report filed in court as part of the criminal case against Lakha.

She had been brought in an ambulance from her home to the emergency room a day earlier another report states, because of abusing painkillers.

Employees with access to the plant are subjected to random drug tests.

Lakha, scheduled to be arraigned Aug. 19 in Superior Court, was ordered by a judge Monday not to dispense any substance to patients pending the outcome of his trial.

Patient records seized from Lakha's offices show McVicker had been one of his patients since early 1987.

Please see Drug, B-1

## Drug

Continued from B-1

according to the investigative report, and other witnesses identified him as receiving prescriptions for large amounts of narcotics.

A search of McVicker's home in late 1993 confirmed that, according to Sims' report, investigators seized plastic bags containing about 20 bottles of prescription drugs — plus several more sample-sized bottles — issued by at least 10 different physicians, including Lakha.

McVicker is not charged with any criminal offense.

According to Sims' report, by the time Opperman entered a prescription drug addiction recovery program last September, she was depending on her supervisor to sell her drugs. She said she was under the influence of powerful painkillers while at work and overdosed three times in August 1993, the report shows, although it's not clear where the overdoses occurred.

Opperman initially saw doctors for an injury she suffered at Diablo Canyon, where she worked as a quality assurance inspector, according to the report.

She said she became addicted to the pain medication and her doctor began treating her for the addiction

and reduced her prescriptions," he told Sims.

McVicker was her immediate supervisor and told her in January 1993, she said, "he knew a doctor that would write her a prescription for anything she wanted," the investigator's report states.

Lakha began prescribing her Darvocet, a painkiller, and the muscle-relaxant Soma. Opperman said she continued getting her prescriptions refilled every other week for the next nine months. But she told the investigator that the physician never took as much as a blood pressure test from her.

McVicker offered to sell her the same drugs prescribed by Lakha, the investigator's report says, when Opperman exhausted her two-week supply early.

"She said that he would bring the drugs to work and sell them to her on the job site at the power plant," Sims wrote in his report.

McVicker kept "large amounts" of prescription drugs in the trunk of his gold 1992 Buick and charged her \$80 for 60 Darvocet and 60 Soma pills, according to the report. Opperman said she popped the pills in the Diablo Canyon employees' parking lot, washing them down with water from a jug McVicker kept in the front seat of his car.