

## U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

DOCKET NOS. 50-277 AND 50-278

PECO ENERGY COMPANY

PEACH BOTTOM ATOMIC POWER STATION, UNIT NOS. 2 AND 3

LICENSE NOS. DPR-44 AND DPR-56

TFFAN

RECEIPT OF PETITION FOR DIRECTOR'S DECISION UNDER 10 CFR § 2.206

Notice is hereby given that by a press release dated October 6, 1994, the Maryland Safe Energy Coalition requests that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) take action with regard to the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station of PECO Energy Company.

The Petition requests that the NRC: (1) immediately shut down both reactors at Peach Bottom until the risk of fire near electrical control cables due to combustible insulation is corrected; (2) suspend the Peach Bottom license until an analysis of the synergistic effects of cracks in multiple parts is conducted; (3) immediately shut down both reactors at Peach Bottom until all safety class component parts in both reactor vessels, including the cooling system, the heat transfer system and the reactor core, are inspected; and (4) immediately shut down both reactors at Peach Bottom pending correction of numerous equipment problems identified in recent NRC inspection reports.

As the bases for its requests, the Petitioner states that the manufacturer of the flame retardant (Thermo-Lag insulation) was indicted on criminal charges (of falsifying tests of the effectiveness of the insulation as a fire barrier); fire near the electrical control cables, due to

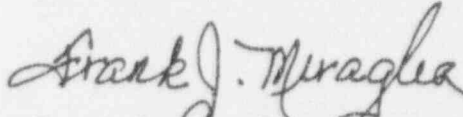
combustible Thermo-Lag insulation, could cause a catastrophic meltdown; cracks were discovered in the structural support (core shroud) for the reactor fuel in Reactor 3; the NRC discovered that on August 3, 1994, both reactors had no emergency cooling water for approximately 1 hour; and according to an NRC report dated August 16, 1994, numerous chronic problems exist at Peach Bottom including cooling tower leaks, coolant injection system vibration, injection valve failures, feedwater vibrations and leakage, fuel pool hot spots, incore probe failures, auxiliary boiler unreliability, valve failures, air solenoid failure, and hydraulic leaks and malfunctions.

The Petition is being treated pursuant to 10 CFR § 2.206 of the Commission's regulations and has been referred to the Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR). As provided by Section 2.206, appropriate action will be taken on this Petition within a reasonable time. By letter dated December 2, 1994, the Director denied the Petitioner's requests for an immediate shutdown of Peach Bottom and for an immediate suspension of the Peach Bottom license.

A copy of the Petition is available for inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room at 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. and at the local public document room located at the State Library of

Pennsylvania, (REGIONAL DEPOSITORY) Government Publications Section, Education Building, Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, Box 1601, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17105.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frank J. Miraglia".

Frank J. Miraglia, Acting Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Dated at Rockville, Maryland  
this 2nd day of December 1994

Maryland Safe Energy Coalition

P.O. Box 33111

Baltimore, MD 21218

410-243-2077

FAX 235-5325

ro0001@epfl2.epflbalto.org

TO: DAN HOLOPY  
NRC

FAX 610-337-5241

FROM: RICHARD OCHS

2 PAGES FOLLOWING

MESSAGE: SEVERAL OF OUR MEMBERS WOULD  
LIKE TO ATTEND THE NRC ENFORCEMENT  
CONFERENCE ON OCT. 3 CONCERNING  
SAFETY INSPECTION 50-277/94-24  
AND 50-278/94-24.

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Baltimore, MD 21218

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**PRESS RELEASE**

October 6, 1994

THE MARYLAND SAFE ENERGY COALITION CALLS FOR THE IMMEDIATE SHUT DOWN OF BOTH NUCLEAR REACTORS AT THE PEACH BOTTOM ATOMIC POWER STATION IN DELTA, PENNSYLVANIA. THE RISK OF A FIRE NEAR THE ELECTRICAL CONTROL CABLES DUE TO COMBUSTIBLE INSULATION, WHICH COULD CAUSE A CATASTROPHIC MELT DOWN, IS UNACCEPTABLE. AS REPORTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE BALTIMORE SUN (SEPT. 30), THIS SAFETY VIOLATION WAS SO SERIOUS THAT THE MANUFACTURER OF THE FLAME RETARDANT WAS INDICTED ON CRIMINAL CHARGES.

WHILE THIS HAZARD EXISTS IN AT LEAST 60 OTHER U.S. REACTORS, THE SAFETY CONDITION AT PEACH BOTTOM IS FURTHER HEIGHTENED BY SEVERAL OTHER SERIOUS VIOLATIONS. WE DEMAND THAT THE REACTORS AT PEACH BOTTOM BE KEPT SHUT DOWN UNTIL THE ABOVE AND FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ARE CORRECTED.

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE HAZARD, CRACKS WERE DISCOVERED IN THE STRUCTURAL SUPPORT (CORE SHROUD) OF THE REACTOR FUEL IN REACTOR 3, INDICATING POSSIBLE CRACKS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE REACTOR VESSEL. WE SUPPORT THE DEMAND OF THE NUCLEAR INFORMATION RESOURCE SERVICE (NIRS)\* THAT ALL SAFETY CLASS COMPONENT PARTS IN BOTH REACTOR VESSELS BE INSPECTED. THIS INCLUDES THE COOLING SYSTEM, HEAT TRANSFER SYSTEM AND THE CORE ITSELF, WHERE SHIFTING PARTS COULD CAUSE THE RODS TO STICK (16 PARTS IN EACH REACTOR).

WE ALSO SUPPORT THE DEMAND BY NIRS THAT THE PEACH BOTTOM LICENSE BE SUSPENDED UNTIL AN ANALYSIS OF THE SYNERGISTIC EFFECTS OF CRACKS IN MULTIPLE PARTS IS CONDUCTED.

IN ADDITION, THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) DISCOVERED THAT BOTH REACTORS HAD NO EMERGENCY COOLING WATER FOR ABOUT AN HOUR ON AUGUST 3, 1994, WHICH MEANS THAT THE REACTORS COULD HAVE MELTED DOWN IF THEY OVERHEATED.

ACCORDING TO AN NRC REPORT (AUG. 16, 1994), OTHER CHRONIC PROBLEMS AT PEACH BOTTOM INCLUDE: COOLING TOWER LEAKS, COOLANT INJECTION SYSTEM VIBRATION, INJECTION VALVE FAILURES, FEEDWATER VIBRATIONS AND LEAKAGE, FUEL POOL HOT SPOTS, INCORE PROBE FAILURES, AUXILIARY BOILER UNRELIABILITY, VALVE FAILURES, AIR SOLENOID FAILURE, AND HYDRAULIC LEAKS AND MALFUNCTIONS.

\* Contact MSEC (above) or NIRS at 1424 16th St., N.W., Suite 601, Washington, DC 20036. Phone 202-328-0002.



SUN

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BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

# Nuclear plant wiring at risk of fire

By Martin Myers  
Sun Staff Writer

A fire retardant widely used in the nation's nuclear plants and known to be defective by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for years is at the center of a federal indictment issued yesterday in which the manufacturer was accused of falsifying tests on its effectiveness.

The insulation, called Thermo-Lag 500, was developed in the wake of one of the nation's worst fires at an atomic power plant in Browns Ferry, Ala., in 1975. Dredits surfaced in 1987 when one utility questioned its ability to prevent the spread of fire.

Following yesterday's indictment, nuclear industry critics asked the NRC to immediately remove the insulation from more than 80 power plants equipped with it. The region's closest plants are in southern Penn-

sylvania and in Virginia. No Thermo-Lag was used at the Calvert Cliffs plant in Lusby.

Four plants in the mid-Atlantic region, all in Pennsylvania, have the retardant: Peach Bottom in York County; the Hartford County line, Lincolnton outside Philadelphia; Susquehanna in Berwick; and Three Mile Island, south of Harrisburg.

Officials of the nuclear industry say that although the risk of a fire is small, the results could be catastrophic if the retardant is not replaced.

"It is there to protect the cables that run the reactor in vital parts of the plant," said James Rocks, staff attorney for Public Citizens in Washington, D.C.

**Manufacturer of defective flame retardant is indicted on charges of falsifying tests**

In the event of a fire, this stuff's not going to work. It's a red herring. Tests showed that Thermo-Lag's joints can weaken and separate, making the cables vulnerable. The retardant also failed tests to resist fire for the required three hours. Critics also say that the insulation — which looks like dry wall and is placed together to cover key electrical cables — can cause cables to overheat and is combustible.

The NRC denied that and said that the retardant has led to no fires or other accidents.

Officials with the NRC said the Nuclear Energy Institute say that safety measures at the plants have been revised to correct the problem. Many plants — including those at

Peach Bottom — have installed "fire watches," with employees patrolling areas where the retardant is installed.

Some rely on automatic fire detectors and sprinklers, and others have installed more Thermo-Lag, using new overlapping techniques approved by the NRC.

Thermo-Lag is being installed at a new plant in Tennessee and in two plants in Texas that are being upgraded. Of the plants affected, 15 have taken corrective steps, according to the NRC.

Because of these measures, it's unlikely that a fire would challenge the fire barrier, said John Koppick, an NRC spokesman.

The seven-count indictment returned yesterday charges Thermo Science Inc. of St. Louis, Mo., and its president, Robin Feldman, in a 10-

See PAGE 20A

## INDICT: Defective fire retardant was sold for use in nuclear power plants

From Page 1A

year conspiracy to falsify laboratory reports and document federal regulations.

Beginning in 1982, Mr. Feldman persuaded officials to purchase Thermo-Lag as part of stopgap repairs to the Browns Ferry plant, which caused a temporary loss of coolant of the reactor.

Instead of independent testing, TSI hired a Missouri laboratory whose president signed test reports

that had been written by TSI, according to prosecutors.

TSI made approximately \$60 million on the sale of Thermo-Lag, U.S. Attorney for Maryland Lynne A. Bellamy said in announcing the indictment yesterday.

The probe, by the NRC's office of inspector general and the NRC office of investigations, began two years ago.

The laboratory that signed off on the tests, Industrial Testing Laboratories Inc., and the company pres-

ident pleaded guilty last spring. The laboratory was fined \$150,000.

In protest, Allan Segal, agent in charge with the investigation and has not been arrested.

"We emphatically deny that either TSI or Robin Feldman engaged in any criminal wrongdoing, and intend to plead not guilty and vigorously contest the charges in court," the company said yesterday in a press release.

Although prosecutors announced that safety measures taken by the

NRC sufficiently protect the public, critics yesterday accused the agency of being more concerned with protecting the industry.

"It costs money to pull this stuff out," said Mr. Rocks of Public Citizens, who estimated the cost at about \$160 million per reactor. "Basically, the NRC's entire budget for the past 10 to 12 years is to try to cause the least amount of expense on the industry as possible."

"We think this should be left out of every reactor if a fire, and they bet-

installation of a combustible material in a fire zone.

Steven West, the NRC's point man on Thermo-Lag, said the matter was being evaluated by regulators.

There are certain locations in the plant, principally inside the containment area, where the regulations say the fire barriers should be assembled," he said. "There are heated applications where they do have this material in the containment, and we are working that and doing

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1988

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