



Consumers  
Power  
Company

General Offices: 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan 49201 • Area Code 517 788-0550

February 3, 1975

Mr. J. G. Keppler  
Regional Director  
Directorate of Regulatory Operations  
Region III  
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
799 Roosevelt Road  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Re: Docket 50-255  
License DPR-20  
Palisades Plant  
UE-74-3

Dear Mr. Keppler:

This letter is written to confirm previous discussions with members of your staff and to close out the possible loss of special nuclear material (SNM) as reported to you by Mr. R. B. DeWitt's TWX of January 7, 1975.

The TWX dated January 7, 1975 transmitted a chronological listing of events regarding the possible loss of an out-of-core fission chamber containing approximately 1.7 grams of enriched uranium. This chronological listing started with the date of shipment of the fission chamber and included the efforts by Consumers Power Company to locate the fission chamber as it had not arrived at the plant in the expected time frame. The TWX concluded that the fission chamber was definitely lost.

On January 9, 1975, two days after submittal of the TWX, the fission chamber arrived at the Palisades Plant. At that time, Consumers Power Company again attempted to trace its routing in an effort to preclude a similar recurrence. We have drawn the following major conclusions with respect to the shipment:

1. Emery Air Freight acknowledged receiving the fission chamber on December 4, 1974 in Cleveland, Ohio.
2. The fission chamber was shipped from Cleveland to Chicago O'Hare on about December 11, 1974. It is not clear what the status of the fission chamber was between December 4, 1974 and December 11, 1974.
3. The fission chamber remained at O'Hare Airport (apparently in the custody of Emery Air Freight) until December 31, 1974. On December 31, 1974, the fission chamber was received by Associated Truck Lines at their Chicago terminal.

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4. The fission chamber left the Associated Truck Lines terminal in Chicago on January 2, 1975 and was shown to have arrived in the Benton Harbor terminal of Associated Truck Lines on January 3, 1975.

5. The shipment remained in the Associated Truck Lines Benton Harbor terminal until delivered to Palisades on January 9, 1975.

The quantity of SNM involved is nearly negligible. (Less than 0.5 gram is defined as negligible.) Even so, fission chambers are important to the operation of the Palisades reactor. The experience gained with this shipment will be taken into account when procuring fission chambers in the future.

This report has been classified as Unusual Event 74-3 in the Palisades Plant reporting system for purposes of formally documenting the event.

Yours very truly,



Ralph B. Sewall  
Nuclear Licensing Administrator

RBS/mel

CC: Directorate of Regulatory  
Operations, Washington, DC  
Directorate of Licensing,  
Washington, DC