

Iowa Electric Light and Power Company

July 28, 1992

NG-92-3299

JOHN F. FRANZ, JR.
VICE PRESIDENT, NUCLEAR

Dr. Thomas E. Murley, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attn: Document Control Desk
Mail Station P1-137
Washington, DC 20555

Subject: Duane Arnold Energy Center
Docket No: 50-331
Op. License No: DPR-49
Installation of Temporary Fire Detectors
in Response to NRC Bulletin No. 92-01

Reference: 1) NRC Bulletin No. 92-01: Failure of
Thermo-Lag 330 Fire Barrier System
to Maintain Cabling in Wide Cable
Trays and Small Conduits Free from
Fire Damage, dated June 24, 1992
2) Letter, J. Franz, Jr. to T. Murley,
NG-92-3184, dated July 23, 1992

File: A-101a, P-72a

Dear Dr. Murley:

This letter is to inform you of our intent to install temporary fire detectors in two areas at the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC). These detectors will provide an alternate means of compliance with the compensatory measures required in NRC Bulletin No. 92-01 (Reference 1).

NRC Bulletin No. 92-01 requested that compensatory measures for inoperable fire barriers be taken for certain applications of the Thermo-Lag 330 fire system. Two areas of the DAEC, the Suppression Pool Room and the Residual Heat Removal (RHR) Valve Room, require compensatory measures in the form of continuous fire watches. To avoid excessive radiation doses and the potential contamination of fire watch personnel, cameras are currently being used with remote video monitors. This allows fire watch personnel to perform their watch in a clean, low-dose area. Even so, there are personnel exposures that would not be necessary if fire detectors were installed in the areas of concern.

We have therefore decided to install a total of four fire detectors, two in each area. These detectors will not provide coverage for all parts of the rooms, but they will cover the areas which contain Thermo-Lag material in the configurations described in the Bulletin.

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The temporary fire detectors are ionization type smoke detectors identical to detectors already installed in areas containing safety-related equipment. The detectors are being connected in series with existing detectors in adjacent areas of the Reactor Building and will be powered by the existing system power supply. Testing of these detectors will be conducted as part of the normal surveillances for the DAEC fire detection system.

The temporary detectors will provide annunciation in the control room upon sensing smoke in the area by causing the existing detection system to alarm. Any short circuit or break in the detector circuits will also be annunciated in the control room. Plant procedures will be updated to inform operators of the additional areas covered prior to considering the detectors operable.

After these temporary detectors are installed, the two continuous fire watches will be replaced by hourly fire watches in accordance with the DAEC Technical Specifications and our Fire Protection Program. This will reduce the radiation exposure to personnel and eliminate a man-hour intensive task while ensuring adequate fire detection in the areas where potentially-degraded Thermo-Lag fire barriers are installed. The DAEC staff will continue to pursue a resolution to the status of Thermo-Lag barriers at DAEC as stated in reference 2.

If any questions should arise, please contact this office.

Very truly yours,


John F. Franz, Jr.
Vice President, Nuclear

JFF/ MD/pjv

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