

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the staff on this date.

Facility: Commonwealth Edison Company  
Byron Nuclear Power Station, Unit 1  
Byron, IL 61010

Docket No: 50-454

Licensee Emergency Classification:  
 Notification of an Unusual Event  
 Alert  
 Site Area Emergency  
 General Emergency  
 Not Applicable

Subject: ERRONEOUS NEWS REPORTS OF "LEAK" AT BYRON 1

Because of a nuclear instrumentation problem at Byron Unit 1, some 1500 construction workers were sent home on November 16, 1984, in an effort to eliminate potential sources of electrical "noise". Area news media apparently learned of this and misunderstood the situation. Some news reports were broadcast about a "leak" at the Byron site; other news reports, however, have correctly described the situation.

The licensee has been unable to complete fuel loading for Unit 1 because of excessive electrical "noise" in a portion of the nuclear instrumentation (source range monitor) used to monitor the reactor core during fuel loading. In an effort to reduce electrical interference from ongoing work on both Units 1 and 2, the licensee dismissed the night shift construction workers and sent the day shift workers home when they reported for work. Virtually all non-essential work has been stopped on the two units until the electrical interference problem can be corrected.

Fuel loading began November 2, 1984, and only 8 of the 193 fuel assemblies remain to be placed in the core. The licensee plans to complete fuel loading on November 16 if the interference problem is resolved.

The resident inspector is on-site, monitoring licensee fuel loading activities.

The licensee and Region III (Chicago) have responded to news media inquiries in an effort to correct the misinformation.

The State of Illinois will be notified.

Region III was informed of the erroneous news reports at 9 a.m., November 16, 1984. This information is current as of that time.

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PNO-III-84-096 PDR

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