

DOCKET NUMBER PR 50
PROPOSED RULE
(53 FR 16435)

(10)

Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

MAY 23 1988
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Gentlemen:

OFFICE OF
NRC

Please include this letter in the official public comment record regarding the Nuclear Regulatory Commission decision to cut back emergency planning requirements for towns in proximity to a nuclear power plant before first-phase operations can begin.

If the Commission does indeed adopt this rule change, it will totally ignore what the public has been trying repeatedly to get the commissioners to recognize: Safety and health concerns are uppermost in the minds of that public. Reducing the part that local elected officials play in reassuring anxious citizens will cause to fail all efforts to speed up the process. There are no shortcuts to gaining public trust.

Residents of all communities near nuclear power plants have an important stake in establishing that the greatest care has been taken in providing for their safety since state boundaries cannot contain an accident. Citizens trust their local elected officials to act in their best interests, and they tend to feel highly suspicious of efforts to substitute federal policy decisions for their local elected representatives' participation in those decisions.

For the reasons listed above, the prior rule change adopted by NRC that would allow utilities to start up nuclear power plants without state and local approval of emergency evacuation plans was a mistake. I am convinced that you would compound that mistake by this most recent unwise step which you are contemplating.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Clausen

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