

TAC# MA 3782



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

October 21, 1998

Mr. Simon Morrin
Syracuse Anti Nuclear Effort
Syracuse Peace Council
924 Burnet Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13203

Dear Mr. Morrin:

Your letter, dated October 7, 1998, forwarded a petition containing approximately 366 signatures collected over the previous 2 months, concerning the core shroud at Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station, Unit 1 (NMP1). The petition requested that the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) (1) enforce the commitment by Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC) to inspect the core shroud at NMP1 for crack growth in mid-cycle, (2) make public all the water chemistry records at NMP1 since July 1997, and (3) hold a public meeting in Oswego County in September 1998 on the mid-cycle inspection and the water chemistry records.

As you know, the NRC held two back-to-back meetings on September 24, 1998--first a public meeting with NMPC to review technical aspects of NMPC's request that the reinspection of vertical welds in the NMP1 core shroud be deferred from 10,600 to 14,500 hours of hot operation so as to permit completion of the normal fuel cycle, and the second meeting to allow the NRC to hear from the public regarding that request. The meetings, held on the campus of State University of New York at Oswego, were well attended by the public, local officials, and various organizations, including members of the Syracuse Peace Council and yourself. The numerous comments and questions during the second meeting were helpful to the NRC in understanding the public's expressed preference that the reinspection be performed once the 10,600 hours are reached and their desire for the strongest possible oversight of nuclear reactors by the NRC. As these are the central issues of your petition, I trust that our discussion of these matters during the meetings have been responsive to these concerns. Your petition and comments received during the meeting are being considered by the NRC staff during its continuing review of NMPC's request. We expect to complete this review and respond to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation by letter before the 10,600 hours are reached. Once issued, our letter will be publicly available and announced to local news media.

With respect to the request in the petition that all NMP1 water chemistry records since July 1997 be made publicly available, these records are part of the plant operating records maintained by, and under the control of, the licensee at the plant site. Although such records are available for NRC audits at the plant, the NRC staff does not possess copies of such records and they are not public records. You will recall from the meeting on September 24, 1998, NMPC stated that, during the current and last several operating cycles, NMP1 has operated well below the water chemistry guidelines recommended by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). NRC inspectors have audited NMPC's monitoring of NMP1 operating chemistry and their findings confirm NMPC's statement. Therefore, the NRC is satisfied that water chemistry at NMP1 has been and is being maintained consistent with the assumptions used to predict bounding crack growth behavior in the structural analysis of the NMP1 core shroud for the existing operating cycle.

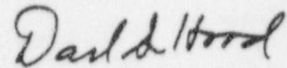
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S. Morrin

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Thank you for sending the petition to the NRC. I trust this reply and our discussions during the meetings on September 24, 1998, have been responsive to the requests and concerns expressed in the petition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darl S. Hood".

Darl S. Hood, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-1
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

S. Morrin

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October 21, 1998

Thank you for sending the petition to the NRC. I trust this reply and our discussions during the meetings on September 24, 1998, have been responsive to the requests and concerns expressed in the petition.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Darl S. Hood, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-1
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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