



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
631 PARK AVENUE
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406

Docket No. 50-293
File RI-86-A-003

FEB 10 1986

Dear Mr.

Subject: Allegation Concerning Nuclear Waste Shipment

On January 10, 1986, you called Ms. Marie Miller of our Region I staff concerning your observation in late December, 1985 of a marked shipment of nuclear waste which entered the Mayflower Sand and Gravel Pit. This letter documents Ms. Miller's return call to you on January 27, 1986, and closes out our file on this issue.

As explained by Ms. Miller, the Boston Edison Company routinely uses the Mayflower Sand and Gravel Pit to provide certified weights on its nuclear waste shipments when the shipments will use the New York State Thruway. Past experience has shown them that the Thruway requires some weight certification, and the Mayflower Sand and Gravel Pit is the most convenient location to obtain it. One of our inspectors reviewed the shipment records at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station and found numerous copies of such weight certifications. Accordingly, our inquiry regarding this matter has been completed.

We appreciate you informing us of your concerns. We feel that our actions in this matter have been responsive to those concerns; however, should you have further questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me. Please be assured that we will continue to perform inspections to ensure that nuclear waste shipment procedures are properly followed at Pilgrim to protect the health and safety of the public.

Sincerely,

Lowell E. Tripp, Chief
Reactor Projects Section 3A
Division of Reactor Projects

The NRC staff does not itself monitor materials and wastes leaving the Pilgrim site. The licensee is required to monitor all items containing or contaminated with radioactivity that are leaving the site. There are several facility procedures that provide specific guidance and instructions to plant health physics workers regarding this activity. All radioactive wastes that are sent to sites specifically intended for burial must meet federal regulations for radiation dose rate and contamination levels as well as special requirements of the burial sites. NRC performs routine inspections of the radioactive transportation area to ensure that licensees are conforming to these regulatory requirements. Further, onsite materials not thought to be contaminated that are being shipped offsite that have the potential of being contaminated are surveyed prior to being allowed off the site. The licensee is not allowed to dispose of contaminated objects in non-radwaste facilities without a special variance provided for in 10 CFR 20.302(a). BECo has not applied for these variances. To our knowledge, no contaminated objects have been disposed of in the town dump or in other public facilities not specifically intended for contaminated objects.

Some cut shrubs with slight contamination were disposed of on BECo property in 1987. The contamination was not detected with standard survey meters, but was so low that it was only detected on clippings using sensitive laboratory equipment. The clippings had been taken after these shrubs had been taken from the site. Notwithstanding, the contamination levels were lower than typical soil background levels and they posed no health hazard (Inspection Report 50-293/87-57, dated March 11, 1988, p.12). NRC has not performed surveys for contamination of the town dump or at other BECo properties. NRC does not routinely perform contamination surveys of this type. As stated in the Inspection Report, the inspectors reviewed the licensee's program for release of material from the site and concluded that it was adequate.

C/11

ALLEGATION PANEL DECISIONS

Priority: Medium

Safety Significance: Unknown

An allegation panel met on 9/1/87 regarding RI-87-A-0107 at Pilgrim, where it was alleged that:

Improper offsite shipment & disposal of radioactively contaminated shrubs.

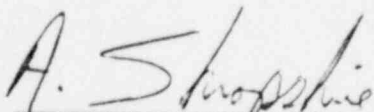
Attendees:

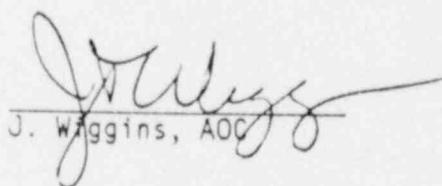
S. Collins	Panel Chairman
L. Bettenhausen	Branch Chief
J. Wiggins	Action Office Contact
R. Nimitz	Acting Chief, FRPS
A. Shropshire	Office Allegation Coordinator

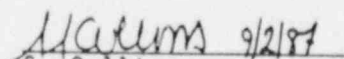
FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- 1) The AOC will recontact the allegor (ECD 9/1/87) to explain what actions the Region is taking. He will also explain that if the source of her information does not call us within 10 days, the NRC will assume that the individual is not going to call.
- 2) The SRI will call the licensee (ECD 9/1/87), requesting an oral response within 10 days.
- 3) The form of the closeout documentation will depend on the licensee's and Regional findings (either an inspection report or memo).
- 4) The AOC will send a closeout memo to the OAC (ECD 9/30/87) and call the allegor to provide the Region's findings (ECD 9/30/87).

Section Chief concurrence required for closeout.


A. Shropshire, OAC


J. Wiggins, AOC

 9/2/87
S. Collins
Panel Chairman

cc:

J. Allan
J. Gutierrez
C. White, OI:RI
W. Johnston
R. Bellamy
L. Bettenhausen
M. Shanbaky
J. Wiggins
Allegation File

ALLEGATION DESCRIPTION

Pilgrim
(Site or Licensee)

50-293
(Docket No.)

Allegation RI-87-A-0107 was received on 8/31/87 at 1600 by J. J. Lyash.

Characterization of the 1 concern(s):

Improper offsite shipment & disposal of radioactively contaminated shrubs.

Confidentiality: No
Employer: Private Citizen
Position: N/A

Type of Regulated Activity: Reactor
Functional Area(s): Offsite Health and Safety

DETAILS: (Timeframe of Allegation: Current)

The allegor stated that she believes that Boston Edison improperly disposed of a truckload of radioactively contaminated shrubs. She indicated that on the night before the Mass. Assistant Secretary of Public Safety, Peter Agnes, toured Pilgrim, the licensee removed, destroyed ("chopped up") and transferred offsite a truckload of shrubs. She stated that the shrubs were transported offsite in a landscapers truck, and that she believes they were radioactively contaminated and improperly disposed of. She also stated that this occurred in the "middle of the night." The allegor declined to provide any additional details concerning the source of her information or the circumstances surrounding the shipment. She also agreed to provide her telephone number for followup questions. She stated that she had not contacted the licensee regarding this concern and would not do so.

J. Wiggins contacted the allegor on 8/31/87 and asked that the individual's source call the Region so more information could be obtained.

ALLEGATION PANEL DECISIONS

Priority: Medium

Safety Significance: Unknown

An allegation panel met on 1/25/88 regarding RI-88-A-0007 at Pilgrim, where it was alleged that:

Radioactive resin was buried under a large pile of soil on licensee property outside the protected area.

Attendees:


W. Kane	Panel Chairman
J. Wiggins	Branch Chief
R. Blough	Action Office Contact
L. Doerflein	Project Engineer, RPS-3B
A. Shropshire	Office Allegation Coordinator

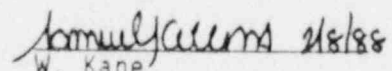
FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- 1) The AOC will send an acknowledgement letter to the alleged (ECD 1/31/88).
- 2) The SRI will provide info to the licensee (ECD 1/31/88).
- 3) The licensee's findings will be documented (ECD 4/15/88) in an inspection report.
- 4) The AOC will send a closeout letter to the alleged (ECD 4/30/88).

Branch Chief concurrence required for closeout.


A. Shropshire, OAC


R. Blough, AOC


W. Kane
Panel Chairman

cc:

J. Allan
J. Gutierrez
C. White, OI:RI
W. Johnston
J. Wiggins
R. Blough
Allegation File

ALLEGATION DESCRIPTION

Pilgrim
(Site or Licensee)

50-293
(Docket No.)

Allegation RI-88-A-0007 was received on 1/21/88 at 0915 by J.J. Lyash.

Characterization of the 1 concern(s):

Radioactive resin was buried under a large pile of soil on licensee property outside the protected area.

Confidentiality: No (no identity provided to OAC)
Employer: Private citizen
Position: N/A

Type of Regulated Activity: Reactor
Functional Area(s): Offsite Health & Safety

DETAILS: (Timeframe of Allegation: 1982)

The allegor contacted the resident office and stated that radioactive resin from a January 1981 resin spill, had been dumped on a large pile on licensee property. The allegor also stated that additional radioactive resin was placed on the pile about one year later. Subsequently, the resin was covered up by other soil. The pile of soil is located adjacent to the contractor parking lot, on licensee property, outside the protected area. The allegor would not identify the source of the information but stated that it came from a "reliable onsite" source.