

November 21, 1988

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-88-89

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 Region IV staff on this date.

FACILITY: Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corp.
Wolf Creek Generating Station
DN: 50-482

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

SUBJECT: MEDIA INTEREST IN PERSONNEL CONTAMINATION AT WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION

This preliminary notification is being prepared for information and in anticipation of interest by the media. On November 21, 1988, at approximately 2:30 a.m. (CST), with the reactor defueled and the reactor vessel head removed, seven people in the reactor building were externally contaminated when low-temperature reactor coolant was inadvertently forced from the top of the reactor vessel. Reactor coolant sprayed from the top of the reactor vessel when a nitrogen bubble from the B Safety Injection Accumulator was inadvertently vented out through the top of the reactor vessel. At the time of the event, the licensee was in the process of draining the B Accumulator in preparation for refilling it with borated water. Apparently, licensee operators fully opened the accumulator discharge isolation motor operated valve prior to closing it from the cracked open position. When the valve was fully opened, a nitrogen bubble was vented to the reactor vessel upper internals. This resulted in reactor coolant spraying from the top of the vessel and contaminating seven people. The licensee reported that these workers received low levels of external contamination and were subsequently decontaminated. No personnel were injured. The licensee is forming a review team to investigate the cause of the incident. All work has been stopped pending the decontamination of the Reactor Building.

Region IV has informed the EDO's office, NRR, and Public Affairs.

The licensee is planning to issue a press release and report the event in accordance with 10 CFR Part 50.72.

The licensee and the NRC are prepared to respond to media inquiries.

The state of Kansas has been informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the Resident Inspectors at the Wolf Creek Generating Station.

This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative.

CONTACT: A. T. Howell 728-8180

RIV:PSA
ATHowell;df
11/21/88

D:DRP
LJCM
11/21/88

RA
RDMartin
11/21/88

1 E34
8/1

8811300219 881121
PDR I&E
PNO-IV-88-089 PNU

DISTRIBUTION:

OWFN			NMBB	NL	MAIL: D/S (Orig. IE34)
Chmn. Zech	SECY	NMSS	AEOD	RES	DOT (Transp. Only)
Comm. Roberts	CA	NRR	ARM		
Comm. Carr	OGC	OIA	OGC	FAX: (5520: <u>11/21/88 @ 2:35 p.m.</u>	
Comm. Rogers	GPA	OI		INPO	Regions & HQ)
Comm. Curtiss	PA	SLITP	H-St	NSAC	
	EDO	OE	PDR	RR1	
				NRC Ops Ctr	
				Licensee (Reactor)	

DISTRIBUTION:

NRCRES, RESPN	Research (Paula Dorm)
NRCRM, AEOD	AEOD (Patty Wilson)
NRCRM, BROWN	ARM (Karen Brown)
NRCRMP, OIADW	Inspector & Auditor (Displaywriter/PC)
NRCRMP, OIDW	Investigations (Displaywriter/PC)
1NRC02, OPAPN	GPA:Public Affairs (Glady Ordaz)
1NRC0304, SLIPN	GPA:State/Local Indian Tribes Program (Brenda Hill)
1NRC0304, NMSSPN	Nuclear Material Safety & Safeguards (Pat Graaf)
1NRC0506, NMSSPN	Nuclear Material Safety & Safeguards (Cathy Jenkins)
1NRC0708, OEPN	Enforcement (Betty Summers)
1NRC1112, NRRPN	Nuclear Reactor Regulation (Donna Berean)
1NRC1516, OGCPN	General Counsel (Edna Downs)
1NRC1718, ZEHPN	Chairman (Lois Altoft)
1NRC1718, EDOPN	Executive Director for Operations (Doris Day)
1NRC1718, OCAPN	GPA:Congressional Affairs (Janice Hester)
NRCRI, RIPN	Region I
NRCRII, RIIPN	Region II
NRCRIII, RIIIPN	Region III
NRCRIV, RIVPN	Region IV
NRCRV, RVPN	Region V