

PDR Advance Copy per J. Rathje

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-V-91-14 Date: July 16, 1991

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

FACILITY: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY
 San Onofre Unit 3
 Docket No. 50-362
 San Clemente, California

Emergency Classification
☐ Notification of Unusual Event
☐ Alert
☐ Site Area Emergency
☐ General Emergency
☒ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: INADVERTENT DRAINING OF SPENT FUEL POOL

On July 15, 1991, at 1:20 p.m. PDT, while the Unit was at full power, the licensee inadvertently drained approximately seven inches (7,000 gallons) of water from the spent fuel pool (SFP). No spent fuel movement was in progress at the time. The control room operator received an alarm indicating decreasing level in the SFP and immediately evacuated the fuel handling building (FHB). No increase in FHB radiation level was detected. No plant safety function was affected and no contaminated water was released to the environment.

The cask pool, adjacent to the main SFP, is normally separated from the main pool by a gate. To provide cooling of the spent fuel, water is drawn from the main pool by the SFP pump, passed through the SFP heat exchanger, and returned to the main pool and cask pool through separate discharge lines. The design of the SFP system is such that this pump cannot reduce SFP inventory below a safe level.

Before the event, the gate was open between the main and cask pools, with the discharge valve to the cask pool open, in support of SFP reracking activities which began in November 1990. In order to support a maintenance activity in the cask pool, operators closed the gate separating the cask pool from the main pool. Due to an apparent procedure weakness, the discharge valve to the cask pool was not closed. This caused some of the returned water to overflow the cask pool, flow to the radwaste building sump, overflowing the sump to a depth of about two inches on the radwaste building floor. This diversion resulted in a level decrease of approximately ten inches in the main pool. The control room operator, upon receiving an alarm, recognized the condition and stopped the SFP pump approximately five minutes after the gate was closed. The water level in the combined SFP subsequently equalized at approximately seven inches below the initial level. Licensee health physics personnel surveyed the area and found minimal activity.

The licensee is currently removing the water from the radwaste building floor and evaluating the root cause of this event. The Resident Inspector responded to affected locations in the plant and is following the licensee's actions.

The licensee is preparing a press release.

This information is current as of 10:30 a.m. PDT on July 16, 1991.

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