



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 19, 2022

Mr. Aaron Frederick
aaron@aaronfrederick.com

SUBJECT: PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER STATION – EFFLUENT DISCHARGE

Dear Mr. Frederick:

Thank you for your e-mail of November 29, 2021, addressed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Commissioners. I understand from your e-mail that you are concerned about potential environmental impacts associated with the possible release of treated radioactive water from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station (Pilgrim) located near Plymouth, Massachusetts. You specifically noted your concern about potential environmental impacts to Georges Bank and the Gulf of Maine.

Holtec Decommissioning International, LLC (HDI), the licensee for Pilgrim, announced recently (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System [ADAMS] Accession No. [ML22007A260](#)) that it will not release the treated water at Pilgrim in 2022 and will store it onsite while evaluating additional options for ultimate disposal. In the meantime, as part of decommissioning, HDI will continue to conduct environmental sampling of vegetation, water, sediment, fish, and shellfish through its Radiological Environmental Monitoring Program (REMP). The licensee will continue to provide the REMP results in its required annual Environmental Report to the NRC. These reports are publicly available.

During operations and decommissioning, nuclear power plants release small amounts of radioactivity. These releases are limited by NRC and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and are typically indistinguishable from the natural radioactivity present in the oceans. Pilgrim must also comply with EPA/Massachusetts State issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit requirements for non-radioactive constituents that may be released.

All nuclear power plants are required to have an NRC-approved Process Control Program that requires treatment such as filtration of the water to reduce the radioactivity to levels as low as reasonably achievable. The water can then be released through radiation monitors in batches that are sampled to ensure the water released is well below regulatory requirements. The NRC routinely inspects the processing systems and radiation monitors to ensure they are calibrated and operating properly. The NRC has inspected the systems at Pilgrim and found them to be compliant with requirements. The NRC will continue to inspect Pilgrim until the plant is completely decommissioned and ensure all activities are conducted in a manner protective of public health and safety.

In accordance with Section 2.390 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, the NRC's "Agency Rules of Practice and Procedure," a copy of this letter is available for inspection at the Public Document Room Monday-Friday by appointment or electronically from the Publicly Available Records component of ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at

<https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To schedule an appointment to visit the Public Document Room, please e-mail PDR.Resource@nrc.gov or call 1-800-397-4209.

Sincerely,



Signed by Lubinski, John
on 01/19/22

John W. Lubinski, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Ticket No. LTR-21-0312

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