

To whom it may concern,

I would like to start by saying thank you to everyone who is taking the time to read this. When I was presented with options for the chance to speak before a decision is made, I asked if I could instead write this letter in the hopes that my words are better expressed, so I appreciate your consideration on this matter. I would like to make it clear from the start that this letter is not an attempt to in any way to justify or make excuses for my actions. In all honesty, I deeply regret the mistake I made, which has ultimately led to the creation of this letter. Having said that, a year and a half ago I used marijuana while on vacation, and subsequently tested positive for THC on a random urinalysis while at work. As a result of this, corrective actions were given to me by Palo Verde, I was investigated by the NRC, and I was ultimately sent an NRC Investigation Report which explained that the NRC will be making an enforcement decision to determine if I, a Licensed Operator at Palo Verde, was willfully unfit for duty while on shift. As an answer to that, the following paragraphs contain my written response which includes the reason for the apparent violation (as well as the basis for any dispute), the corrective steps that have been taken and the results achieved, and the corrective steps that will be taken.

Firstly, the reason for the apparent violation, and basis for dispute. As previously stated, I used marijuana while on vacation, and subsequently tested positive while at work. This is the reason for the specific violation delineated in the Investigation Report, which is that I was 'willfully unfit for duty'. I want to express that I have been honest and forthcoming throughout this entire process, and I have cooperated and accepted all consequences given. I have not attempted to excuse my actions, because I knew the rules and I broke them. This should be apparent in the investigation. However, I feel the need to express my disagreement with a decision that determines I was 'performing duties under the influence' or 'willfully unfit for duty'. I understand the official definition per the Code of Federal Regulations states "performing duties immediately before or after submitting a urine sample that later tests positive is considered performing duties 'under the influence'". And I also understand that what I did meets this definition. However, this is misleading because I was not "influenced" (or "affected") by any drug while performing my duties, as the standard definition of "influenced" is usually understood. I say this because, upon my return to work immediately following my use of marijuana, I had one week of training (July 7, 2020 - July 10, 2020) before returning to shift on Saturday night of that week (first day of shift was night shift on July 11, 2020), and any immediate or lasting effects of the drug had long worn off before I went back on shift. In fact, I did not think I was even above the testable limit by that point in time, mainly due to my own ignorance and misunderstandings of how long it stays in the system. Nonetheless, I take great pride in my work and career, and I do not take my Licensed Responsibilities lightly, and I would be remiss if I did not express my concerns with this decision because of that.

At any rate, next is the corrective steps that have been taken and the results achieved. Following my positive test, my access to the Protected Area was removed for 4 weeks, during which time I was not paid. Also, during that time, I attended private counseling sessions with a substance abuse counselor. These sessions were greatly helpful to me because I learned a lot about myself and those around me. I won't get into everything that we discussed but suffice it to say I was under a great deal of stress outside of work, to include the constant strain of [REDACTED] (to name only a few), and I was not taking appropriate steps to manage it. Again, not making an excuse, I only want to illustrate that this wasn't just a random recreational use, but rather there were external and internal factors involved. Through the disciplinary measures taken, my decision making is reinforced by knowing with absolute certainty the consequences of any further violations, and through the counseling sessions I have been given many very useful tools to help combat stresses in healthy and meaningful ways.

Finally, corrective steps that will be taken. As a result of the positive drug test, I have been assigned drug testing on a more frequent basis (usually at least once a month). I am also accountable to elevated consequences for any further violations to include, at a minimum, 5 years of removed access. Furthermore, I speak honestly with my coworkers about what happened, why I did it, and why they should not.

To conclude, I cannot stress enough how hard this has hit me. As I've said, I take pride in the work that I do, and I am grateful that I get to continue doing it despite my mistake. I have worked in the nuclear profession for 18 years now, 11 years in the Navy and 7 years here at Palo Verde, and I am appreciative to be a part of this amazing field! I have a wife and three kids that all depend on me, and when it's all said and done, I made a decision that put years of hard work and my family's wellbeing at risk. Any decision or punitive measures I receive pales in comparison to that. To that end, I've expressed my concerns, but I will respect whatever decision the NRC makes regarding this issue. I hope that I have properly expressed my perspective as well as my remorse, and I ask that that as a decision is made regarding this issue, all of this, will be considered.

Thank you again for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully,

Quitmeyer,
Magnus (Z11483)

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Date: 2021.12.16 10:53:54 -07'00'

Magnus Lawrence Quitmeyer II
Reactor Operator, Palo Verde Generating Station

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