

October 29, 1998

SECY 98-249

For: The Commissioners

From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of
the EDO

/S/

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 23,
1998

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*No input this week.

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Meeting with NEI on 50.54(a)

On October 15, 1998, members of the staff (DRCH, DRPM, and OGC) met with staff from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), representatives from four licensees, and other members of the public to discuss the staff concepts for responding to the petition. In particular, the staff discussed the proposed Direct Final Rule (DFR) elements to elicit input from the meeting attendees on the efficacy of the DFR as an interim step to provide some additional flexibility for licensees to make changes in their quality assurance (QA) programs without needing to obtain NRC approval. Some questions arose during the meeting, notably, the need for the staff to clarify what set of QA program precedent changes would be available for other licensees to utilize. NEI stated that the proposed DFR would provide enabling language to address, in the near term, the burden reduction that was sought in the original petition. NEI further stated that the ultimate language that is inserted in 50.54(a) will be extremely important in order to assure uniform understanding of the conditions associated with the criteria which are intended to reduce the number of QA program changes which licensees need to submit for NRC approval.

Oconee 10 CFR 50.46 Exemption For a One Time Test

On October 21, 1998, the Oconee licensee plans to submit a request for exemption to 10 CFR 50.46 in order to conduct a series of one time tests of the onsite emergency electrical power distribution system. The licensee indicated that it will not meet its loss-of-coolant accident/loss-of-offsite power (LOCA/LOOP) design basis for the two operating units during a brief period (less than one minute) at the beginning of each test on the shutdown unit. The test is scheduled during the first or second week of November 1998. The test series is expected to consist of two tests, however, each may be performed three times if problems occur or insufficient data is obtained.

Staff Meeting with Consumers Power on the Palisades Pressure Vessel Fluence

On Monday, October 19, 1998, the NRC staff met with Consumers Power Company (CPC) staff, Westinghouse Electric Company staff acting as CPC's consultant and two individuals also acting as CPC's consultants. The meeting was held at CPC's request in order to discuss the staff's request for additional information (RAI) concerning CPC's proposed reevaluation of the vessel fast neutron fluence which contributes to vessel embrittlement.

The discussion covered questions on dosimeter uncertainties and discrepancies in the measured values, cavity dosimetry and its

usefulness in the measurement of the vessel fluence, the methodology used in the estimation of the fluence and compliance with the recommendations of ASTM Standard E944-96.

Based on this discussion the licensee will prepare a final submittal in response to the staff RAIs. At the end of the meeting the licensee indicated that in the future they may revise the methodology to take advantage of possible biases in the method and they may recalculate the source term used in the early cycles to better define their value.

Three Mile Island Unit 1

GPUN intends to submit its license application for transfer of ownership after the NRC publishes its new rule regarding this procedure. The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register for public comment on September 11, 1998, and the comment period expired on October 13, 1998. The licensee is estimating mid-November for its submittal.

First Energy Reaches Asset Transfer Agreement with Duquesne Light

On October 15, 1998, FirstEnergy Corporation announced that it had signed an agreement in principle with Duquesne Light Company that would result in the transfer of 1,436 MW owned by Duquesne Light at eight generating units (both nuclear and fossil) in exchange for 1,298 MW at three power plants owned by FirstEnergy (all fossil). A definitive agreement on the exchange of assets is expected to be reached by the end of this year.

FirstEnergy Corporation is the parent holding company for The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, Centerior Service Company, Toledo Edison Company, and the Ohio Edison Company. The Ohio Edison Company is the parent holding company of OES Nuclear, Inc., and Pennsylvania Power Company. FirstEnergy, which operates both Davis Besse and Perry, owns 100% of Davis Besse, 86.26% of Perry, 52.5% of Beaver Valley Power Station, Unit 1 (BVPS-1), and 86.24% of BVPS-2. Duquesne Light, which presently operates the Beaver Valley facility, owns the remaining portions of Perry and Beaver Valley.

The asset transfer will result in FirstEnergy obtaining 100% ownership of both Perry and BVPS-1,2. License transfers, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80, and the conforming license amendments, pursuant to 50.90, will be required. In keeping with Duquesne Light's announced plans for auctioning its generating assets, the three fossil units to be acquired by Duquesne Light are expected to be auctioned within the next six months.

In separate activities, the staff continues its review of the proposed formation of the FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC). FENOC will be a wholly-owned subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corporation and will focus on the operation of their nuclear facilities. Staff approval of FENOC is expected by the end of

this calendar year.

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Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

U.S. - Japan Technical Safeguards Bilateral Meeting

On October 19-20, 1998, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, along with staff from the Departments of State and Energy, and from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, met with a Japanese delegation, led by the Japanese Science and Technology Agency, to discuss issues related to the implementation of international safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The discussions included the following: status of additional protocols to IAEA safeguards agreements, status of IAEA's strengthened safeguards measures, status of Japan's plutonium facilities, technical support activities with IAEA and between the U.S. and Japan, status of IAEA safeguards implementation at the U.S. and Japanese facilities, and safeguards assistance to the Former Soviet Union countries. Separate discussions were held to discuss the status and developing safeguards concepts for the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant.

Meeting with Siemens Power Corporation

On October 14, 1998, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards met with the Siemens Power Corporation (SPC) licensing manager and staff to discuss potential safety and safeguards licensing changes that may be needed to support SPC's production of fuel pellets for TVA test nuclear power plant fuel assemblies using slightly irradiated material. SPC is planning to process about 2,000 kg of low-enriched uranium product that has up to about 6 Bq/g of transuranics. SPC will need an amendment to a current license condition which limits transuranic alpha activity to 3.3 Bq/g. SPC is also looking into whether the processing of this material is within the threshold definition in 10 CFR 50.2 for production facilities that plutonium content not exceed 10^{-6} gram plutonium per gram U-235.

Site Visit to Proposed Private Fuel Storage Facility Location

On October 14, 1998, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office accompanied technical assistance contractors from the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA) and Oak Ridge National Laboratories (ORNL) on a visit to the proposed site of the Private Fuel Storage Facility (PFSF) on the reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians. The reservation is bordered by Tooele County, Utah. The purpose of the visit was to provide CNWRA and ORNL with an opportunity to view the site and surrounding areas of interest in more detail than had previously occurred. CNWRA is assisting the staff in the safety review of the application by Private Fuel Storage (PFS), LLC, for a license to construct and operate PFSF, an away-from-reactor Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation. ORNL is assisting the staff in

the preparation of the PFS Environmental Impact Statement.

Potential New Spent Fuel Dual Purpose Cask Application

On October 15, 1998, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) met with representatives of Gesellschaft fur Nuclear Behalter (GNB) who are considering applications for two new dual purpose cask designs. The first design, the CASTOR X32-S is a forged steel cask capable of handling 32 PWR fuel assemblies. The second design, the CONSTOR X52, is a dual purpose cask consisting of a steel inner and outer shell filled with concrete as a shielding material capable of handling 52 BWR assemblies. GNB provided detailed information on the preliminary design. GNB indicated that they are targeting an application for the CASTOR X32-S in May 1999. Representatives of International Fuel Containers, Inc., GNB's marketing representative, discussed pursuit of potential U.S. users of the CASTOR design. The staff discussed existing SFPO policy on resource scheduling for cask reviews and answered technical questions about regulatory requirements for dual purpose casks.

Meeting on Sedimentation at L-Bar Uranium Mill Tailings Site

On October 15, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management met with staff from Sohio Western, the licensee for the L-Bar site, to discuss possible buildup of sedimentation in the site runoff diversion channels. The meeting took place in New Mexico, and involved visiting several sites discussed in a recent report submitted by Sohio Western consultants as analogs of the L-Bar site to estimate the quantity of sediment expected to be deposited yearly in the diversion channels. As a follow up to the meeting with the licensee, staff will issue a review of the analog report. The Sohio Western representative requested that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission provide its review as soon as possible to allow Sohio Western time to plan any necessary construction for the 1999 construction season, beginning in April 1999.

State of Nevada Comments on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Decision to Proceed with Development of its Site-Specific Implementing Rule for High-level Waste Disposal at Yucca Mountain

On October 20-21, 1998, the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste meeting was held in Amargosa Valley, Nevada. A representative of the State of Nevada gave a presentation expressing the State's views on 10 CFR Part 63 and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) decision to proceed with its implementing rule for geologic disposal of high-level waste at Yucca Mountain. The presenter indicated that the State objects to the Commission proceeding with its rule prior to issuance of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) site-specific standard. In addition, Nevada believes that NRC is being driven by the Department of Energy's schedule and, in doing so, is violating the Energy Policy Act of 1992 by proceeding in the absence of an EPA

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standard. The presenter indicated that the State objects to NRC changing its hearing process for a geologic repository from an adjudicatory hearing to a legislative hearing. The State also indicated that a high-level waste repository proposed for Yucca Mountain, Nevada, should not be licensed under standards that are less protective than those applicable to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

The representative from the State indicated that there was a letter on the Governor's desk expressing these concerns with the approach laid out in SECY-98-225 and commenting on specific aspects of Part 63. The letter is expected to be signed in the near future and faxed to Chairman Jackson.

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Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Meeting with Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI)

Division of Systems Technology staff met with EPRI I&C and Human Performance staff at EPRI, October 19-20, 1998. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ongoing research activities in these areas and explore opportunities for cooperative future research. EPRI staff has expressed substantial interest in I&C research being conducted for RES under our Cooperative Research Agreement with the University of Virginia and our Hybrid Control Room research being conducted by Brookhaven National Laboratory. Additional interactions are planned over the next three months which may lead to establishing tasks in these areas which can be added to the current Memorandum of Understanding between NRC and EPRI.

Video Conference with EPRI

On Tuesday, October 20, RES held its quarterly video conference with EPRI staff and management. Ashok Thadani and Margaret Federline represented RES, with presentations and discussions led by several staff members from each of the RES Divisions. EPRI was represented by senior EPRI management Robin Jones and Bendi Chexal, with presentations and discussion from their cognizant staff. The discussions touched on cooperative efforts for a broad range of subjects, including high burnup fuel, steam generator tube integrity, fire protection, risk-informed in-service inspection, aging issues, underwater welding of highly irradiated stainless steels, and the integrity of dry storage casks. During the video conference, Ashok Thadani and Robin Jones signed an addendum to the umbrella Memorandum of Understanding addressing information exchange on fire risk research. This was an important first step in furthering cooperation with the industry in this area. Another area of interest is EPRI's proposal for support of university research. The underlying interest is in developing a cadre of new engineers that have been trained in areas unique to nuclear energy. EPRI's original proposal involved NRC participation in lectures and publication of course materials directed at nuclear reactor technology. However, EPRI has recently expanded the proposal to consider jointly funding limited experimental research in university facilities. RES is evaluating this overall proposal, particularly in light of the loss of our educational institution grant program. EPRI and NRC staff are currently planning a joint Commission Briefing for early in CY1999.

Project Review Meeting for the Joint Containment Model Test Program

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI) of Japan and the NRC are engaged in a joint Containment Model Testing Program. The

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basis of the agreement is that Japan is responsible for the design and construction of the models while we are responsible for the analyses and testing of the models. Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) is the contractor performing the work for the NRC. The Nuclear Power Engineering Corporation (NUPEC) is the contractor performing the work for MITI. A large prestressed concrete containment model (1/4 scale) is currently being constructed at SNL in Albuquerque, NM. The test to failure under pressure loading will be performed in FY 2000 and post test analyses will determine the ability of state of the art analytical methods to predict the actual failure modes and margins for prestressed concrete containments. Methods of this type are used to predict containment capacities and fragilities in risk calculations and to estimate degradation effects for aging containment structures.

On October 14 & 15 the RES Project Manager and the SNL Principal Investigator met at NUPEC headquarters in Tokyo, Japan with NUPEC staff and it's subcontractors. The major topic on the agenda was a discussion of construction schedule adjustments required by NUPEC. For the last two years, construction on the model has had to slow down due to the downturn in the Japanese economy and its effect on the NUPEC budget. Since SNL must apply much of the instrumentation during construction, e.g. gauges on the outside of the liner had to be applied after the liner is erected but before the concrete is poured, SNL schedules have to be adjusted as well. A draft of schedule changes that will have the minimum cost impact on both sides was developed and its detailed implementation will be studied by both sides with the goal of fixing a schedule by the end of the calendar year.

American Electric Power Makes Presentation on DC Cook Sump Evaluation Project

On October 14, 1998, representatives of American Electric Power (AEP) made a presentation to RES and NRR staff on the methods, models, and tools used by AEP during the DC Cook Sump Evaluation Project. The thrust of the AEP project was to understand the predicted response of the DC Cook emergency core cooling system (ECCS) to loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) generated debris blockage of the containment sump. AEP and its contractors discussed the methods for identifying debris sources, estimation of debris generation and transport, and calculation of potential head loss due to debris accumulation.

RES has recently started a program, Sump Debris Blockage Study, that will assess the potential effect of debris blockages in pressurized water reactor (PWR) containment on ECCS performance. The RES study has been designated generic safety issue 191. Some of the methods, models, and tools used by AEP and its contractors to assess DC Cook (i.e., plant specific analysis), may be useful in assessing PWRs in a generic manner. The AEP presentation illustrated the level of complexity and detail involved in a comprehensive analysis of sump debris blockage.

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Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Region II Training

Members of ERB conducted post-emergency phase training for Region II senior management via video conference on October 21, 1998. This training was conducted in preparation for NRC Region II participation in the Sequoyah Ingestion Exercise scheduled for November 5, 1998. This follows full NRC plume phase participation to be conducted on November 4, 1998.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS

1. PNO-I-98-048, Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. (Vermont Yankee 1), EARLY COMMENCEMENT OF PLANNED OUTAGE DUE TO A DEGRADING STEAM LEAK
2. PNO-I-98-049, Safety Light Corporation, FIRE IN BUILDING ON SAFETY LIGHT CORPORATION SITE
3. PNO-I-98-049A, Safety Light Corporation, FIRE IN BUILDING ON SAFETY LIGHT CORPORATION SITE
4. PNO-II-98-044, Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital, MEDICAL EVENT INVOLVING DOSE TO FETUS
5. PNO-II-98-043, Shepherd Tissue, REPORTED EXCESSIVE HAND EXPOSURE

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Security Guards at NRC Headquarters

The arrangement by DFS to have armed GSA Federal Protective Officers (FPO) at the White Flint complex expired October 23, 1998. Their presence was a temporary measure until NRC's contract security guard force obtained the appropriate Maryland State permits to carry weapons. NRC's security contractor has obtained the required weapons permits for a number of the guard force personnel to ensure coverage both during the work week and on weekends.

Restack

The current phase of the Restack project (10th floor) is progressing on schedule. The new carpet and wall covering have been installed and workstation installation began on October 17, 1998. Move coordination meetings have been held to facilitate the move in early November.

U.S. Enrichment Corporation (USEC)

USEC has submitted a draft version of their Security Plan for the Protection of Classified Matter relative to their proposed license application for Advanced Vapor Laser Isotope Separation (AVLIS). This plan will be a part of the license application scheduled to be submitted to NRC in October 1999. Comments on the draft plan are being prepared by DFS.

NRC Headquarters Facilities Contract

The solicitation for bids on the contract to provide facility operation and maintenance services for NRC Headquarters buildings was issued on October 21, 1998. Contract proposals are due on December 4, 1998.

Medical Use of Byproduct Material; Workshop (Part 35)

A document announcing a public workshop concerning the NRC's proposed rule presenting a comprehensive revision of its regulations concerning the medical use of byproduct material and the proposed revision of the Medical Use Policy Statement was published in the Federal Register on October 16, 1998 (63 FR 55559). The workshop will be during the Organization of Agreement States' All Agreement State meeting. The workshop will be held on October 31, 1998.

Changes, Tests, and Experiments (Parts 50, 52, and 72)

A proposed rule that would amend the regulations concerning the authority for licensees of production or utilization facilities

to make changes to the facility or procedures, or to conduct tests or experiments without prior NRC approval was published in the Federal Register on October 21, 1998 (63 FR 36098). The propose rule would clarify which changes, tests, and experiments require evaluation and the criteria that determine when NRC approval is needed. The comment period for this action closes December 21, 1998.

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Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
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Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during
the 5-Day Period of October 16, 1998 - October 22, 1998:

Radio-luminescent exit signs, reports on named licensees (FOIA/PA 99-013)

Michigan Community Action Agency Assoc., correspondence with NRC's General Counsel. (FOIA/PA 99-014)

Maine Yankee, enforcement actions, all documents associated with 96-299, 96-320, 96-375, 96-397, 97-034, 97-147 and 97-559. (FOIA/PA 99-015)

Radioactive spills or releases, Round Hill, VA in Loudoun County. (FOIA/PA 99-016)

Materials license holder listing. (FOIA/PA 99-017)

Enforcement records related to: Entergy Corp.; System Energy Resource; and Grand Gulf. (FOIA/PA 99-018)

MLTS database. (FOIA/PA 99-019)

Training Manual, 10 CFR Part 20, "Standards for Protection Against Radiation." (FOIA/PA 99-020)

Uranium Mill Tailings impoundments, 1975 through 1989 time frame, Plateau Resources site in Shootaring Canyon, UT. (FOIA/PA 99-021)

Named individual, investigations/allegations, Susquehanna Steam Electric Station. (FOIA/PA 99-022)

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Health Center Programs Offered to NRC Headquarters Employees

During the month of October, several health programs were offered to Headquarters employees. A three-part Prostate Cancer program—education, prostate special antigen blood test, and digital examination—was offered and 31 examinations were performed. A number of women participated in the Breast Cancer and Cervical Cancer education and screening programs. On October 14, 1998, Lyn Turner of HealthSouth Imaging spoke on advances in mammography.

On October 13, 1998, 480 influenza vaccinations were given. Additional nurses were on hand to ensure a smooth and efficient process. Flu shots will be available in the Health Center, by appointment, through November 6, 1998.

Arrivals		
MERRIFIELD, Jeffrey S.	COMMISSIONER	OCM
HARRIS, Larry	MC&A PHYSICAL SCIENTIST	NMSS
PULLIAM, Timothy	BRANCH CHIEF	OCFO
Retirements		
ARMSTRONG, Gary	SR AUDIOVISUAL PROD SPEC	ADM
WIGGINTON, Sarah	SR DIRECTIVES SPEC	ADM
Departures		
WILLIAMS, LaCarrol	INT'L RELATIONS ASSISTANT	OIP

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 23, 1998

Media Interest

Chairman Jackson was interviewed by the A&E network for its special on the 100 most influential people of the last 1000 years, due to air in the spring.

The Patriot-Ledger (Harrisburg, PA) is planning a story on Thermo-Lag.

Several reporters attended the Oconee scoping meeting on license renewal in South Carolina.

A San Francisco television station is airing a story on the Humboldt Bay decommissioning.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
98-188	Note to Editors: Meeting Date Changed
98-189	NRC Schedules Meeting on Reporting Requirements for Nuclear Power Plants
98-190	Note to Editors: ACRS Reports Received
98-191	NRC Status Report on Efforts to Head Off Computer Problems in Year 2000
98-192	Commissioner Merrifield Takes Oath of Office; Dicus Swearing-In Set for Next Week
Regions:	
I-98-116	NRC to Discuss Apparent Violations With N.Y. Nuclear Gauge User
III-98-53	James E. Dyer Named Regional Administrator for NRC Region III
IV-98-39	NRC Opts Not to Cite Envirocare Over Special Nuclear Materials Issue

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
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IAEA Technical Cooperation Meeting

The OIP IAEA desk officer, Jodi Lieberman, will attend, at the IAEA's invitation and cost, a planning meeting for three large regional nuclear safety projects run by the Technical Cooperation Department November 3-6 in Vienna, Austria. NRC has been invited to participate in this meeting because of NRC's high level of participation in those and other technical cooperation nuclear safety projects and the U.S. financial contribution to those projects. NRC attendance at the meeting will enable us to provide important input to planned 1999-2000 activities for these projects.

Y2K Meeting on Soviet-Designed Reactors

Representatives from OIP and NRR (Jodi Lieberman and Jerry Wermiel) attended a meeting hosted by the Office of Senior Coordinator for Nuclear Reactor Safety at the State Department on Friday, October 23. The meeting was held to discuss the issue of Y2K as related to Soviet-designed reactors, as well as to introduce Morgan Libby, the U.S. Cost Free Expert who will spend a year at the IAEA working on Y2K issues as they related to Soviet-designed and other reactors. The meeting, which was also attended by John Koskinen, the head of the President's Council on Y2K, produced a very fruitful discussion of potential problems at Soviet-designed reactors as a result of the "Millennium Bug," possible courses of action, both bi- and multi-laterally, and a plan of action to be authored for Mr. Koskinen to report on at an upcoming December Y2K meeting which he is to attend.

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Office of the Secretary
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Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-98-168	7/9/98	Proposed Rulemaking Activity Plan
SRM on 98-168	10/19/98	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-168	10/19/98	(same)
2. Revised SRM on SECY-98-179	10/23/98	Request for Commission Waiver of the Staff Cost Recovery Policy for Work Performed for the U.S. Agency for International Development
3. SECY-98-199	8/19/98	Proposed Rule: 10 CFR Part 31 - "Requirement for Those Who Possess Certain Industrial Devices Containing Byproduct Material to Provide Requested Information"
SRM on 98-199	10/23/98	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-199	10/23/98	(same)
Negative Consent Documents		
1. SECY-98-226	9/29/98	Issuance of a Section 274f, Atomic Energy Act Order to Exempt Envirocare of Utah, Inc. From the Licensing Requirements for Special Nuclear Material in Diffuse Waste that will be Regulated by the State of Utah
SRM on 98-226	10/22/98	(same)
Chmn Jackson's comment on 98-226	10/20/98	(same)
2. SECY-98-231	10/2/98	Authorization of the Trojan Reactor Vessel Package for One-Time Shipment for Disposal
SRM on 98-231	10/22/98	(same)

Cmr. McGaffigan's Comment on 98-231	10/7/98	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-98-217	9/18/98	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending September 11, 1998
2. SECY-98-229	10/2/98	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending September 25, 1998
3. SECY-98-230	10/2/98	Insights From NRC Research on Fire Protection and Related Issues
Memoranda		
1. M981023	10/23/98	Affirmation Session, 10/23/98 - I. SECY-98-227 - Northeast Nuclear Energy Co. (Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 3), Docket No. 50-423-LA- 2, Memo & Order (Resolving Standing Issue), LBP-98-22 (Sept. 2, 1998); II. SECY-98- 233 - Yankee Atomic Electric Co. (Yankee Nuclear Power Station), Docket No. 50-029- LA, Memo & Order (Decision on Standing), LBP-98-12, 47 NRC 343 (June 12, 1998); III. SECY-98-240 - Hydro Resources, Inc.: Presiding Officer's Memo & Order Setting Schedule and Ruling on Bifurcation, 9/22/98

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to The President dated October 15, 1998 designates NRC's liaison to the Presidential Design Awards Program (incoming letter dated September 23, 1998 also released).
2. Letter to Energy Secretary Bill Richardson dated October 15, 1998 provides MOU between the NRC and the DOE concerns governing NRC funded work performed at the DOE laboratories (incoming letter dated September 16, 1998 also released).
3. Letter to Dr. Junko Matsubara, Japanese Nuclear Safety Commission, dated October 13, 1998 concerns his recent visit (incoming letter dated September 15, 1998 also released).
4. Letter to Louisiana Governor M.J. (Mike) Foster, Jr., dated October 13, 1998 solicits continued participation in the NRC's State Liaison Officer program.

5. Letter to Connecticut Governor John G. Rowland dated October 13, 1998 solicits continued participation in the NRC's State Liaison Officer program.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Shaun P. O'Hern (Denial of Operator's License); Docket No. 55-32442-SP; Notice of Hearing.
2. 10 CFR Part 50; Financial Assurance Requirements for Decommissioning Nuclear Power Reactors; Correction.

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Region I
Items of Interest
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Permagrain Products Inc.

The Permagrain Products, Inc. (PPI) SDMP site is located near Karthaus, PA. PPI is licensed for a cobalt-60 pool irradiator, and for strontium-90 and cobalt-60 contamination remaining on-site from previous occupants. Operations from previous occupants ceased in the late 1960's. Site decommissioning started in July, 1998. On October 12, 1998, Region I was notified that airborne contamination of strontium-90 had spread from a hot cell to other areas of a building at PPI. A Region I inspector responded to the site on October 13, 1998. The release occurred in an access area to one of the facility's hot cells due to a possible problem in the hot cell ventilation system. Contamination spread throughout the immediate adjacent areas and into an administrative area in the same building. Several individuals on site had skin contamination and one of those individuals has entered into a bioassay program to evaluate a possible intake. The licensee stated that their surveys demonstrated that there were no offsite releases. PPI committed that no additional decommissioning work would commence in the building until they received NRC Region I agreement with steps taken to prevent recurrence. Recovery operations continue at the site, with decommissioning expected to restart in a couple of weeks.

Commonwealth of PA Staff Visit to Region I

On October 19, 1998, Region I, DNMS, Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch staff hosted individuals from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Bureau of Radiation Protection (BRP) to discuss in-situ gamma spectrometry. The BRP individuals examined the equipment used by Region I for in-situ gamma spectrometry, observed operation of the equipment, and toured the regional lab facilities.

Danbury Hospital - Cremation of an Iodine-125 Implant Patient

On October 19, 1998, the RSO from Danbury Hospital in Danbury, CT, informed NRC Region I of the pending cremation at a Stamford, CT crematorium of an iodine-125 implant patient. The patient had been implanted August 28, 1998 with 11.5 (mCi) millicuries iodine-125 seeds. Only five seeds totaling 1.5 mCi (0.3 mCi each) remained in the body after maximum removal by the licensee. Danbury Hospital's RSO plans to monitor the event along with the radiation specialist from the State of Connecticut.

Region II
Items of Interest
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Florida Power and Light Company (FP&L) - Turkey Point

On October 22, 1998, the Regional Administrator and selected Regional staff members met with FP&L officials to discuss the results of NRC's Systematic Assessment of Licensee's performance (SALP) for the Turkey Point. A rating of superior was achieved in all four functional areas for the third consecutive SALP period. This was the last SALP meeting conducted in Region II prior to suspension of the SALP process. Following the presentation, a public meeting was held with State and Local officials to discuss activities for the Turkey Point facility.

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Region IV
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Public Meeting with Omaha Public Power District

A public meeting was conducted on October 20, 1998, in the Region IV office between Omaha Public Power District management representatives and the NRC. The meeting was to continue discussions regarding the results of a common cause analysis that was conducted by the Fort Calhoun Staff.

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