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# United States Senate

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE YEAR 2000  
TECHNOLOGY PROBLEM

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6486

November 30, 1999

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve  
Chairman  
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

*Handwritten:*  
N. F. W.  
V. C. H.  
D. R. C. H.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your recent response to the Special Committee on the Year 2000's November 1 letter. I appreciate your willingness to provide information on the steps the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is taking to ensure the nation's nuclear power plants are Y2K ready.

At this time, I have no reason to believe that the Y2K problem will cause serious disruptions at any of the nation's nuclear power plants. But given the potential harm even one nuclear accident can cause, I want to be especially clear about the need for added vigilance at this time. Heightened public anxiety about the large number of unknown factors means that even those regulators and industries which put a premium on public safety at all times must be especially sensitive to the Y2K issue.

In recent weeks I have heard from numerous constituents expressing anxiety about the Y2K problem and its potential impact on plant safety systems in general and on Connecticut's Millstone facility in particular. As you are probably aware, a protest was recently held at Millstone to voice concerns that sufficient safety measures be in place. Please know I take these concerns very seriously and am eager to see them fully addressed in a clear, concise and timely fashion.

To that end, I am writing for specific information you have gathered to ensure the public's health and safety is not jeopardized at the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant. I am particularly interested in knowing why the biennial full scale emergency drill, which would have necessitated the NRC's participation, was postponed from September 1999 until March 2000. I understand other safety drills have been conducted this year, but for reasons I am unaware of, and for which I would like an explanation, did not include Y2K scenarios as recommended by the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Public perception is one of our largest remaining Y2K challenges. I am sure you share my view that the health and safety of our citizens must be our number one Y2K priority and that we must do all we can to communicate that view. Providing as much detail as possible to about the Y2K readiness plans of the nation's nuclear power plants is the best way I know to reassure the public that regulators and industry alike are serious when it comes to the Y2K issue.

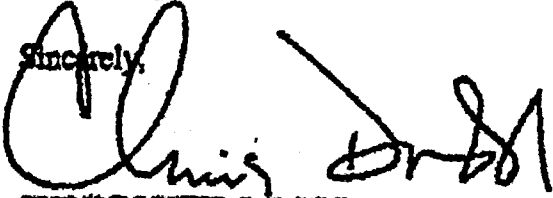
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The Honorable Richard A. Meserve  
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With only a few weeks to go before New Year's, I look forward to hearing from you no later than December 6. I thank you in advance for your personal attention to this request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Dodd", written over the word "Sincerely,".

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD  
Vice-Chairman

# Chris Dodd

U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT



EMBARGOED UNTIL 8:00 AM  
November 30, 1999

CONTACT: Unice Lieberman  
(202) 224-7286

## DODD SEEKS ANSWERS ON MILLSTONE Y2K SAFETY *Asks Why Drills Did Not Include Y2K Scenarios*

Washington, D.C. — Senator Chris Dodd, D-Conn., Vice-Chair of the Special Senate Committee on the Year 2000 (Y2K) Technology Problem, today asked Northeast Utilities and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to provide specific information on the measures they have undertaken to ensure that the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant is Y2K ready.

"Given the potential harm even one nuclear accident can cause, I want to be very clear about the need for added vigilance at this time," Dodd said. "Heightened public anxiety over the Y2K problem means that even those regulators and industries which put a premium on public safety at all times must be especially sensitive to the Y2K issue."

Although the Y2K problem is not expected to cause serious disruptions at any of the nation's nuclear power plants, Dodd raised concerns about the decision to postpone the plant's biennial full scale emergency drill, which would have included the participation of the NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), from September 1999 to March 2000. In addition, he asked why drills Millstone conducted independently did not include Y2K scenarios.

"The health and safety of our citizens must be our number one Y2K priority," Dodd said. "We must do all we can to communicate that view. Providing as much detail as possible about the Y2K readiness plans of the nation's nuclear power plants is the best way I know to reassure the public that regulators and industry alike are serious when it comes to the Y2K issue."

Dodd requested a response from Northeast Utilities and the NRC no later than December 6.

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