

January 6, 2000

For: The Commissioners  
 From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO /RA/  
 Subject: SECY-00-0006 - WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEKS ENDING DECEMBER 24, 1999 AND DECEMBER 31, 1999

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\*No input week ending 12/24/99.  
 #No input week ending 12/31/99.

**Enclosure**

- A\*#
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- R\*#

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[ENCLOSURE B](#)

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**Nuclear Regulatory Commission/Nuclear Energy Institute Workshop on Spent Fuel Storage Generic Issues**

On December 17, 1999, a workshop on spent fuel storage generic issues was conducted at Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Headquarters. The workshop was attended by more than 70 representatives from NRC, the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), the Electric Power Research Institute, utilities, cask vendors, and the public. The Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, and the Senior Vice President, NEI, opened the workshop, set the tone, and emphasized the objectives for the three panels/roundtables. These roundtables included: significant dry cask storage issues and their relative priorities, high burnup fuel and burnup credit. At the conclusion of the workshop, NEI noted that the highest priority issues are high burnup fuel, streamlining the license amendment process, burnup credit, standard technical specifications, and certificate and independent spent fuel storage installation license renewal. On high burnup fuel, NRC committed to work with NEI, and NEI committed to develop a framework for evaluating high burnup fuel issues.

Regarding burnup credit, NRC committed to provide NEI with a study being conducted by the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research on burnup credit, and NEI agreed to review the report.

**Meeting with BNFL Fuel Solutions**

On December 15, 1999, a management meeting was held between the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards and BNFL Fuel Solutions (BFS) to discuss current and future actions being taken by BFS to resolve outstanding corrective actions associated with their response to the October 6, 1997, Demand for Information. At the meeting, BFS indicated they expected to resolve the remaining issues by December 30, 1999, and will notify the Nuclear Regulatory Commission when they are completed. BFS also committed to fabricate casks in conformance with the Certificate of Compliance.

### **Meeting with Portland General Electric**

On December 15, 1999, a meeting was held between the Spent Fuel Project Office and Portland General Electric (PGE) to discuss the root causes associated with the failure of a coating used on the internals of a spent fuel storage cask at Trojan Nuclear Plant. PGE presented its plans to qualify a new coating for use and to submit a 10 CFR Part 72 license amendment to implement the new coating. PGE also presented a proposed schedule to complete these actions. No spent fuel storage casks have been loaded at Trojan, and none will be loaded, until they receive Nuclear Regulatory Commission approval of the license amendment.

### **Meeting with Molycorp**

On December 15, 1999, staff from the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection met with representatives of Molycorp to discuss Molycorp's plans to decommission its Washington, Pennsylvania, facility. This site is listed on the Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP). Molycorp plans to remediate the contaminated portion of the site to meet SDMP Action Plan criteria for unrestricted release. A decommissioning plan (DP) for this action was submitted on June 30, 1999. Molycorp plans to dispose of the waste from this action in an onsite disposal cell. This latter portion of the decommissioning (i.e., the disposal cell) would comply with the criteria in the License Termination Rule ([10 CFR Part 20](#), Subpart E) for restricted release. The DP for the onsite disposal cell is due in April 2000. A fundamental element of the overall plan is long-term institutional controls for the restricted released portion of the site. Molycorp presented and discussed draft documents that they propose to establish such controls. The institutional controls would consist of a legally-binding and enforceable administrative consent order between Molycorp and a government entity, and a restrictive covenant and deed restriction for the property. Financial assurance would consist of an irrevocable letter of credit and a standby trust agreement. The Division of Waste Management staff noted that the success of this approach was dependent upon a government entity agreeing to enter into such a consent order. Staff stated that while an executed order would not be required in the DP submittal, some type of agreement in principle would be needed before the DP could be accepted for review.

### **Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards**

On December 13, 1999, the Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards (ISCORS) met. Representatives were present from the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Defense, Office of Science & Technology Policy, Occupational Safety & Health Administration, Food and Drug Administration, and other federal agencies. The first presentation was a discussion of the General Accounting Office audit on radiation standards. Other topics discussed included EPA's Radon in Drinking Water Proposed Rule, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Uranium Recovery Program Commission Papers, an update on NRC's clearance rule, NRC decommissioning issues, international meetings, and status of subcommittee activities. The next quarterly meeting of ISCORS is proposed for March 15, 2000, and will be held at NRC Headquarters.

### **Nuclear Regulatory Commission/Department of Energy Management Meeting**

In the latest of a series of meetings, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Department of Energy ([DOE](#) [EXIT](#)) management and staff met on December 16, 1999, at NRC Headquarters, to discuss program status and progress in implementation of DOE's quality assurance (QA) program. Attendance at the meeting included representatives from the Nevada Legislature, electric utilities, citizens' groups, state of Nevada, and affected units of local government. The meeting agenda focused on detailed discussion of QA issues and the integrated schedule of documents that support submission of the Site Recommendation Report. DOE's presentation included its plans and methodology for resolving data qualification questions that have grown out of its past QA problems. The NRC staff is reviewing this information and considering possible followup actions.

### **Fansteel Advisory Board Meeting**

On December 16, 1999, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff attended the fifth Site Specific Advisory Board (Board) meeting in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The meeting began with an update on decommissioning activities at the Fansteel facility; followed by a discussion of a document entitled, "Questions and Answers Related to Fansteel Inc.'s Decommissioning Plan," prepared by Earth Sciences Consultants; followed by board discussions; and ending with questions from the audience. Several members of the public were in attendance, in addition to board members and the local newspaper.

The construction of the containment cell and how it will affect the surrounding environment were the main topics of discussion. Other topics included: (1) the potential for contamination of the Arkansas River; (2) proposed contents of the containment cell; (3) candidates for long term care of the site; (4) possibilities for radiation release to the atmosphere; and (5) flooding concerns. With regard to the latter two topics, the Board informed the public that air sampling data can be obtained from the Fansteel Muskogee facility, and that Fansteel is outside the 500-year flood plain.

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Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**Workshop on Entombment Option for Decommissioning Power Reactors**

On December 14-15, 1999, the RES Division of Risk Analysis and Applications and the NMSS Division of Waste Management held a public meeting to discuss the viability of entombment as an option for power reactor decommissioning. There were 59 stakeholders in attendance representing several States, various government agencies, industry, and the public. The issues discussed included the potential impacts on the public, States, and other government agencies if the entombment option is permitted; the impact on the low-level waste compacts; the degree of industry interest; institutional controls; engineered barriers; inclusion of greater than Class C waste; and financial provisions needed. In general, the industry favored approval of entombment as an option for decommissioning, whereas other stakeholders raised concerns with this option.

Comments received during the workshop will be used by the NRC staff in developing recommendations on whether to proceed with rulemaking to permit the entombment option as a generic decommissioning alternative for license termination. A transcript of the meeting will be put on the new NRC web page at [www.nrc.gov/NRC/wwwforms.html](http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/wwwforms.html). Additional comments on the entombment option can be submitted on this same web page or in writing.

**Draft Regulatory Guide on Alternative Source Terms**

RES has issued [Draft Regulatory Guide DG-1081](#), "Alternative Radiological Source Terms for Evaluating Design Basis Accidents at Nuclear Power Reactors." This draft guide is being developed to provide guidance to licensees on acceptable applications of alternative source terms and on the scope, nature, and documentation of associated analyses and evaluations. The guidance being developed is in conformance with recent revisions to the regulations on alternative source terms.

ENCLOSURE D

Incident Response Operations  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS:**

1. PNO-III-99-054, Test Masters, Inc., RADIOGRAPHY ACTIVITIES CAUSE LOCAL EVACUATION
2. PNO-IV-99-057, Reed Engineering Group, Inc., STOLEN PORTABLE MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGE

ENCLOSURE G

Chief Information Officer  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of December 17, 1999 through December 23, 1999:**

Self, all records of investigation re Niagara Mohawk Power Corp.	(FOIA/PA 2000-0083)
Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., Aliquippa, PA, re byproduct material license nos. 37-02567-04 and 37-2567-07.	(FOIA/PA 2000-0084)
Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP), current site list.	(FOIA/PA 2000-0085)
General Instrument Corp., 3101 West Pratt Ave., Chicago, IL.	(FOIA/PA 2000-0086)

ENCLOSURE H

Chief Financial Officer  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**NRC's 1999 W. Edwards Deming Outstanding Training Award**

On Thursday, December 9, 1999, Deborah B. Mahdi, Senior Budget Analyst in the Division of Planning, Budget, and Analysis, accepted NRC's 1999 W. Edwards Deming Outstanding Training Award recognition plaque as a result of NRC being nominated

for its Program and Resource Management Training (PRMT) curriculum. This curriculum was developed as a joint effort between the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Office of Human Resources to help Agency managers and supervisors improve their program and resource management skills. The training was also designed to help the participants understand concepts of performance measurements and results consistent with the implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act. The recognition plaques are presented annually at the 1999 Dimensions of Leadership Conference to honor those Federal agencies that have completed an innovative and impressive employee development and training initiative.

ENCLOSURE M

Office of Public Affairs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**Media Interest**

OPA received calls on the demonstration by the Y2K World Atomic Safety Holiday, a coalition of 50 public interest groups, urging NRC to shut down nuclear plants before the new year.

OPA headquarters received several calls on the certification of the Westinghouse AP600 reactor design.

There was interest in the \$300K settlement against TSI in the thermo-lag case, and in the sale of the Clinton plant.

<b>Press Releases</b>	
<b>Headquarters:</b>	
<u>99-264</u>	NRC Considers Requiring Licensees to Notify Native American Tribes of Certain Radioactive Waste Shipments
<u>99-265</u>	Licensing Board to Hear Oral Arguments on Shearon Harris Spent Fuel Pools
<u>99-266</u>	NRC Joint Subcommittee to Hold Meeting on January 13-14 in Rockville
<u>99-267</u>	NRC Completes its Environmental Review of Application to Renew Operating License for Oconee Nuclear Station
<u>99-268</u>	NRC Finds No Outstanding Y2K Problems at Nuclear Plants Undergoing Decommissioning
<u>99-269</u>	Panel Recommends NRC's New Reactor Oversight Process be Used for all Plants
<u>99-270</u>	New NRC Regulation to Permit Nuclear Power Plants to Change Accident Analyses of Public Radiation Dose
<u>99-271</u>	Note to Editors: NRC Staffing for Media Assistance During Y2K Transition
<b>Regions:</b>	
<u>III-99-50</u>	NRC Proposes \$88,000 Fine Against U.S. Enrichment Corp. for Employment Discrimination Violation at Paducah Plant
<u>III-99-51</u>	NRC to Hold "Roundtable Discussion" at Public Meeting on New Reactor Oversight Program

ENCLOSURE N

Office of International Programs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

**Arrangement between NRC and the Atomic Energy Committee**

On Monday, December 20, 1999, the formal arrangement covering exchange of technical information and cooperation in nuclear safety matters between NRC and the Kazakh Atomic Energy Committee (KAEC) of the Ministry of Energy, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Kazakhstan was renewed for an additional 5 year term. The bilateral arrangement was signed by Chairman Meserve for NRC and Chairman Zhantikin for the KAEC and coincide with the visit of Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev to the US.

ENCLOSURE O

Office of the Secretary  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending December 24, 1999

	<b>Document Released to Public</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
<b>Decision Documents</b>			
1.	<u>SRM on SECY-99-168</u>	12/21/99	Improving Decommissioning Regulations for Nuclear Power Plants

	<u>Voting Record on 99-168</u>	12/21/99	(same)
2.	<u>SRM on SECY-99-251</u>	12/21/99	Policy Statement on Staff Meetings Open to the Public: Revision of Section D
	<u>Commission Voting Record on SECY-99-251</u>	12/21/99	(same)
3.	<u>SECY-99-269</u>	11/17/99	Renewal of the Safety Light Corporation Licenses at Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania
	<u>SRM on 99-269</u>	12/22/99	(same)
	<u>Voting Record on 99-269</u>	12/22/99	(same)
<b>Information Papers</b>			
1.	<u>SECY-99-281</u>	12/9/99	The Vision of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research Role
<b>Memoranda</b>			
1.	<u>M991222</u>	12/2/99	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session: I. SECY-99-286 - GPU Nuclear Corporation, Docket No. 50-219-OLA-2, Memorandum and Order (Terminating Proceeding), LBP-99-45 (Dec. 15, 1999); II. SECY-99-287 - Niagara Mohawk Power Corp. et al. (Nine Mile Point, Units 1 and 2), Docket Nos. 50-220 and 50-410

### Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Congress dated 12/17/99, transmits NRC monthly report (for the month of November) on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties .

### Federal Register Notices

1. [10 CFR Parts 21](#) , [50](#) , and [54](#) ; Use of Alternative Source Terms at Operating Reactors; Final Rule.
2. Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, In the matter of: Sequoyah Fuels Corporation, Gore, Oklahoma Site Decommissioning; Notice of Hearing.
3. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste, Notice of Meeting.
4. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), Meeting of the ACRS Subcommittee on Plant Operations; Notice of Meeting.
5. Licensing Support Network Advisory Review Panel; Notice of Public Meeting.

ENCLOSURE P

Region I  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending December 24, 1999

### Sovereign Consulting, Robbinsville, NJ

On December 16, 1999, in response to report of a damaged exit sign containing tritium, a Health Physicist from the Division of Nuclear Materials Safety responded to the offices of Sovereign Consulting in Robbinsville, NJ. Negligible levels of tritium contamination (<100 disintegrations per minute per 100 square centimeters) were identified on the bag containing the sign (a generally licensed device), on the floor where the sign had been stored, and in the vehicle used to transport the sign from Sovereign Consulting's client, Rowe International. The exit sign had been broken during removal from Rowe International's Whippany, NJ, facility, which is under demolition. The inspector assisted Sovereign personnel in further bagging the broken sign to prevent spread of contamination. On December 20, 1999, the Health Physicist visited the Whippany facility. Surveys revealed maximum removable tritium contamination levels of between 10,000 and 20,000 disintegrations per minute per 100 square centimeters. These levels are well within the NRC's criteria for release for unrestricted use for tritium. Rowe International and Sovereign Consulting plan to return all of the signs to the manufacturer.

ENCLOSURE P

Region II  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending December 24, 1999

### Carolina Power and Light Company - Hatch

On December 22, 1999, a Projects Branch Chief and a Shearon Harris resident inspector attended a Kiwanis Club meeting in Sanford, NC. Sanford is about 25 miles from the Harris site and is in Lee county. Region II had been asked to speak on the function of the resident inspectors at the Harris site and provide information on the spent fuel pool (SFP) expansion at Harris. The staff described the basic functions of the NRC and what the residents do at the site.