

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/>

Three Mile Island Resources

Title: Three Mile Island Alert: Island Updates, 1987-1988

Date: 1987-1988

Location: TMI-Hurst ; TMI-TMIA

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

1987's



Three Mile Island Alert

Island Updates

News Watch on the Harrisburg Area

Selections from 1987 issues of ISLAND UPDATES published by Three Mile Island Alert and Three Mile Island Legal Fund.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, Sept. 5, 1987

Hearings sought on TMI water-disposal plan

Two anti-nuclear groups have asked for more hearings on GPU Nuclear Corp.'s plan to evaporate 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water, and the state has expressed support for the groups' actions.

Three Mile Island Alert Inc. and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance have filed requests for hearings on the proposal before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, TMI spokesman Eric Epstein said yesterday.

"The commonwealth is supporting SVA and TMIA in the request for a hearing," said Dan Mangan, Department of Environmental Resources press secretary. "As a state we have a continuing interest in seeing that the cleanup operation is run correctly and that TMI is operated safely."

The state has not filed a request for hearings, Mangan said. It has, however, asked the NRC to give it "interested state status,"

which would let the state participate in any hearings that might be held, Mangan said.

GPU, operator of TMI, last year asked for permission to evaporate through boiling the radioactive water at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant.

Most of the water was generated during the 1979 accident at Unit 2, and the rest resulted from leakage. Some of it has been used in the cleanup since the accident.

A8—The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, April 21, 1987

3 TMI workers exposed to radiation, official says

Three workers breathed in radioactive material stirred up while they were in an auxiliary building at the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor, a company spokesman says.

The workers, who received doses of radiation far below federal limits, were exposed during two separate incidents while working in a cubicle that houses water filters used to cleanse reactor coolant water, said Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., TMI operator.

The incidents, which occurred on March 7 and 12 at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear power plant, recently were reported in a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission status report on Unit 1 for the period of March 6 to 20.

An internal investigation by GPU Nuclear has shown that the first exposure incident probably was avoidable, Tomb said. "In our review, we judged that the work in the cubicle was not planned out as thoroughly as it might have been," he said.

On March 7, GPU workers were practicing removal of the water filters from the cubicle in the auxiliary building. Two workers were inside the cubicle when other workers standing on the cu-

bicle's roof accidentally knocked a tool against an opening in the roof and dislodged cobalt, Tomb said.

The workers inside the cubicle were not wearing respirators, he said.

GPU Nuclear is studying ways to avoid similar incidents, but any solution is unlikely to include the wearing of respirators, which are uncomfortable, Tomb said.

Because reactor coolant water is filtered in the cubicle, contamination inside is unavoidable, Tomb said.

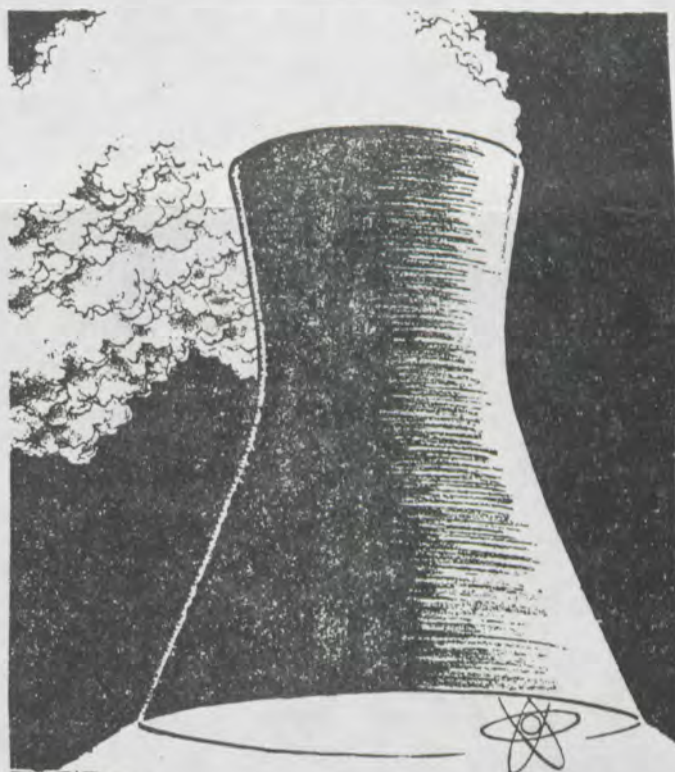
One of the workers exposed in the March 7 incident also was exposed in the March 12 incident, which took place in the same auxiliary building cubicle.

In this case, two workers were preparing a cask to accept the water filters by putting a plastic covering on the container to protect it from contamination, Tomb said. Once the cask is loaded with filters, it is shipped off for disposal of the filters, he said.

While cutting holes in the plastic, the workers again accidentally stirred up cobalt that was on a piece of equipment connected to the cask, Tomb said.

Tomb said the company will correct that problem.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, July 15, 1987



Ask not for whom the reactor tolls, it tolls for thee.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, June 16, 1987

Drug tests positive for 10 at TMI

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

Nearly a third of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant employees tested for illegal drugs in the past three weeks tested positive, GPU Nuclear Corp. officials said yesterday.

Ten employees — including nine from GPU Nuclear and one from an unidentified contractor — tested positive. However, none was involved in plant operation.

Thirty-three employees were tested as part of an investigation into drug use at the Londonderry Twp. plant. The employees work at both the disabled Unit 2 and the operating Unit 1 facilities.

Eight of the 10 workers who tested positive were suspended for 30 days without pay. One resigned and another was dismissed for "refus[ing] to cooperate with the investiga-

tion" after testing positive.

Also, an employee of another unidentified contractor was dismissed after refusing to submit to the drug test.

Tests were administered to the employees "for cause" after TMI officials heard the employees might be using drugs off-site, officials said.

GPU spokeswoman Lisa Robinson refused to disclose the types of jobs the employees held. Robinson would only say they "were in positions related to plant operations, but were not involved in the actual operation of either plant."

GPU spokesman Doug Bedell said the urine samples of employees who tested positive were retested twice as part of the investigation. Bedell would not say which drugs were found, saying that information "wouldn't affect the administration of the drug policy."

The suspended employees will have to complete a drug rehabilitation program and retake a site access psychological evaluation before returning to work. They then will be subject to random drug testing, officials said.

Since March 1986, when GPU Nuclear's formal drug testing program began, a total of 70 employees have been given drug tests for cause; 16 have tested positive and two have resigned either before a test result was known or upon refusing to submit to a test, GPU officials said.

The company has informed "appropriate law enforcement agencies and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission" of the results of its investigation.

A move by the company to institute random drug testing of its unionized employees was struck down by an arbitrator last year.

NRC leaks

Agency chummy with industry it oversees

ONE OF THE victims of the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island was public confidence in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its commitment to fulfilling its role as the watchdog of the nuclear industry. The doubts and suspicions were confirmed recently when a Senate committee heard sworn testimony that top officials in the NRC alerted electric utilities about pending investigations and otherwise compromised their responsibility as independent regulators.

Julian Greenspun, a former federal prosecutor, told how the NRC's executive director for operations, Victor Stello Jr., quashed an investigation of falsified coolant-leak test results at General Public Utilities' Unit 2 TMI reactor that occurred for six months in 1978 with the knowledge of an NRC inspector. Stello, he said, objected that the investigation would be bad for plant morale and was quoted as saying, "Nobody is going to tell me how to treat my licensees."

That was hardly an isolated example, either. There was testimony suggesting that Commissioner Thomas M. Roberts provided confidential documents to another utility under investigation. Roberts denied supplying the documents but admitted that he subsequently destroyed the seized papers because he believed someone was trying to frame him. But Ben B. Hayes, the agency's top investigator, told the Senate Government Affairs Committee, that the effect of Roberts' document destruction was to thwart an in-house investigation of himself.

SEN. JOHN HEINZ, R-Pa., raised an obvious question in light of these revelations: Was the recent shutdown by the NRC of the Peach Bottom nuclear power station in York County a "flash in the pan" meant to curry favor with Congress? Was that action, which we lauded in this space, an attempt at damage control designed to defuse the very

serious allegations of being in bed with the nuclear industry that NRC officials must have known were about to descend upon them? The circumstances surrounding the NRC's unprecedented action certainly suggest as much.

Greenspun's charge that the NRC is "a captive of the industry it regulates" is hardly new nor one that only the NRC has had to face. The NRC was formed out of the old Atomic Energy Commission in the early 1970s because of the inherent conflict of trying to have one agency both promote and regulate the nuclear industry. But the problem appears to be generic in that regulators, whatever the field, invariably develop institutional sympathies for the industry they are supposed to oversee. The Interstate Commerce Commission, for example, is generally perceived to be a captive of the railroad industry.

AT ISSUE THEN is how to combat this tendency; how, in fact, to keep the regulatory system honest. Even the presence of an internal Office of Investigations in the NRC for the last four years and a man in charge of it — Hayes — who was serious and dedicated to his task wasn't sufficient to maintain the integrity of the system. But public exposure of the NRC's unacceptable conduct may help if it results in appropriate sanctions for those responsible.

Whatever the eventual remedy, ultimately the nuclear industry is bound to pay a big price for small favors. For all its exhaustiveness, for all of the time and delay consumed by the NRC in passing on the question of restart of the undamaged reactor at TMI, the agency did more to undermine public confidence than enhance it because it could not hide its contempt for public opinion. But in a democracy, even one that depends on highly sophisticated technology, public opinion is the bottom line.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Sept. 10, 1987

Unit 1 leaks traced to weld

Leaks of radioactive water in the Three Mile Island Unit 1 cooling system are believed to have been caused by a broken weld between heat exchange tubes, according to the nuclear plant operators.

GPU Nuclear Corp. was forced to shut down Unit 1 for two weeks in June to replace two letdown coolers that had developed leaks even though they were only 1½ years old.

Letdown coolers reduce the temperature of water coming from the reactor. The water leaked from one cooling system into another and not onto the floor of the reac-

tor, according to a company spokesman.

After inspecting the letdown coolers, company engineers found a broken weld on a tube inside one of the coolers, a recent company statement said.

The break is believed to have been caused by a weld that was made during fabrication of the coolers. That weld apparently failed to hold tight under operational stress caused by varying temperatures, GPU Nuclear said.

The new coolers installed in June are being operated differently to reduce the problem, the company said.

B4—The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, May 8, 1987

Stockholder expresses anger over payment

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

At least one General Public Utilities Corp. stockholder is unhappy about the payment this month of GPU's first common stock dividend since the March 1979 accident at TMI Unit 2.

Some stockholders may be unhappy that the 15-cent dividend is too small, but Eric Epstein is unhappy that he's getting one at all.

Epstein is a member of the Harrisburg anti-nuclear group Three Mile Island Alert and a GPU stockholder.

Epstein says the utility should not be paying stockholders a dividend because the future of the

cleanup of the damaged Unit 2 reactor is uncertain.

"There are no assurances that Unit 2 will ever be completely cleaned up, decontaminated and decommissioned, yet GPU is rewarding its shareholders for the progress made in the cleanup," Epstein said yesterday.

The company announced last month that it will pay a 15-cent dividend on common stock — the first since the accident — on May 29.

The dividend, company officials said at the time, was prompted by progress in the \$1 billion cleanup program of Unit 2.

"GPU's mismanagement of the

cleanup casts a shadow on its ability to complete the project," Epstein said. "In fact, the next phase of the cleanup, referred to as post defueling monitored storage, is nothing more than a guise for GPU to renege on its pledge to safely clean up and decontaminate Unit 2," he said.

GPU spokesman Gary Plummer said last night the company would not have restored a dividend payment if the funding of the cleanup was uncertain. "We feel all portions of the cost-sharing plan are assured," he said.

He said the cleanup program is "one of the reasons for the small size, the modest amount of the dividend. We feel we can sustain that level of payout."

He also said the plant will be in

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1987

TMI employee fired by GPU for sleeping

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

GPU Nuclear Corp. has fired a shift supervisor after a report found he often slept on the job.

The employee for Three Mile Island's Unit 2 reactor was dismissed Friday but had had his operating license suspended since July when the investigation into the incident began, said Gordon Tomb, GPU Nuclear spokesman.

Tomb said it was company policy not to release the man's name or to say how long he had been employed by GPU Nuclear.

The company hired Edwin H. Stier, former director of the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice and an attorney, to conduct the independent investigation after it received anonymous tips about the supervisor.

An inquiry also was started by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which received the same tips. A report is expected in mid-December, said John Thomas, chief of technical support for the NRC's TMI-2 Cleanup Project.

In his report dated Nov. 20, Stier said the employee's sleeping and inattention to his work had been a "long-standing pattern" beginning in the early 1980s.

However, management's first response did not come until October 1986 when it issued a warning to the employee.

Stier is continuing his investigation into why it took management so long to respond to the problem.

In his report, Stier said 21 witnesses saw the shift supervisor asleep on the job. While most of the sleeping incidents occurred on the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift, there also were instances during the 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift.

"This pattern [of sleeping] continued despite confrontations between the [shift supervisor] and members of his crew over the issue of sleeping and despite several warnings beginning in October 1986 by TMI-2 management," Stier wrote.

Stier also noted that the shift supervisor denied he ever slept on the job, charging the witnesses testified out of a personal dislike.

However, Stier said the employee offered no convincing reason why the testimony would be fabricated.

a "safe, stable and secure position" when it is in post defueling monitored storage.

The company has never ruled out returning Unit 2 to service.

Epstein said examples of mismanagement at GPU Nuclear included the case where the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

levied a \$64,000 fine over allegations a utility subcontractor harassed an employee for reporting safety problems and another case where GPU paid a \$40,000 fine for improperly modifying reactor head lift equipment.

Epstein, who was in attendance at a GPU stockholders' meeting in Whippany, N.J., yesterday, said dividend payments should not come until cleanup completion is more certain.

TMI crew to clean up lower region of core

After removing a large portion of the debris from the main reactor core, the cleanup crew at Three Mile Island's Unit 2 reactor is getting ready to cut through steel plates to get at the once-molten fuel that seeped into the lower region of the core.

GPU Nuclear Corp. officials called the cleanup of the normal core region "an important milestone." Workers have removed 193,000 pounds of debris, two-thirds of the total.

The crew will now move onto drilling out support posts and then cutting through five stainless steel

plates, ranging in thickness from 1 to 13.5 inches, to get at the 10 tons of debris located in the lower portion of the core, beneath the area where the fuel was located. The work is scheduled to start next month.

An additional 28 tons is located at the very bottom of the core, and workers are scheduled to start removing it next spring.

During the March 1979 accident at the Londonderry Twp. plant, the reactor overheated to the point where the fuel melted and ran down into the lower and bottom core area.

Drilling of the reactor core during the cleanup has caused more debris to drop into that area, said Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear, the plant operator.

This stage of the defueling, which is expected to begin next month, will include long-handled tools and vacuuming equipment to remove the debris.

The last major step in removing reactor fuel is expected to begin next fall, when workers take the fuel that seeped in between two internal walls of the reactor vessel. Tools to accomplish this task are still being developed.

The core debris is being loaded into canisters, which are shipped to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory by the U.S. Department of Energy for research and storage. So far, 200 canisters have been loaded with core debris and 133 have been shipped.

—The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, March 26, 1987

Scientist: GPU's evaporation plan may kill babies

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

Twenty to 120 infants could be killed if GPU Nuclear Corp. is allowed to evaporate radioactive water into the midstate air, a scientist said last night.

Dr. Ernest Sternglass, who made that assessment, and another scientist addressed an advisory panel on TMI Unit 2's cleanup process.

The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination for Three Mile Island Unit 2 voted to recommend against two alternatives for disposal of radioactive water stored at the Londonderry Twp. plant. The panel met at Holiday Inn Center City.

The panel, in separate votes, unanimously opposed dumping the water in the Susquehanna River and voted 5-4, with one abstention, against GPU Nuclear Corp.'s proposal to evaporate the 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water into the air at the Londonderry Twp. plant.

The advisory panel meets with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Washington April 16 to deliver its recommendations. The NRC has final authority on disposal of the water.

The panel votes came after a five-hour meeting in which Sternglass, professor of radiological physics at the University of Pittsburgh, and Dr. Richard Piccioni, staff scientist for New York-based Accord Research and Educa-

tional Associates Inc., told the advisory panel research has linked even low levels of strontium-90 and other radionuclides that are in the water to cancers, cancer deaths and infant mortality.

Sternglass' remarks were made to reporters after his formal presentation and were based, he said, on reports of illness and deaths in upstate New York and Maryland after the 1980 venting of krypton gas from TMI.

Sternglass also said 100 to 500 people who are ill could die prematurely as a result of deficient immune systems after absorbing such radiation.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff, in an environmental impact study, ruled that none of the 10 options they considered for disposal of the water — including GPU Nuclear Corp.'s evaporation plan — posed any health or environmental danger.

Most of the panel members with technical expertise — Dr. Neil Wald, Joseph J. DiNunno and Dr. John Luetzelshwab — appeared to discount the testimony of Sternglass and Piccioni.

Wald summed up his opinion after the meeting this way: "Because we cannot at very low levels demonstrate effect [of radiation], it becomes a matter of assumption. Their assumptions [Sternglass and Piccioni] are not in keeping with the consensus of the experts," Wald said.

Sternglass said there was a clear increase in infant mortality in the second half of 1980 after the venting of krypton gas. Piccioni earlier told the panel his organization detected levels of strontium-90 in the air during the krypton

gas venting that were 900 times higher than what GPU predicted or picked up in its own monitoring.

After presenting a host of charts and study summaries tying low-level radiation to illness and death, Sternglass said: "I must warn you, this does not constitute absolute proof. It's only a probability, a likelihood that this [illness and deaths] is caused by radiation."

"I cannot tell what this means," he said. "I cannot tell you whether to believe the projections of the industry or independent scientists. We both have our biases. You have to decide, in the light of probability, like a jury, whether I may be right."

Sternglass, Piccioni and various members of the public recommended that the water — generated in the March 1979 Unit 2 accident — be maintained in storage tanks on the island.

A motion to recommend to the NRC to maintain the water on the island pending further study was defeated when Lancaster Mayor Arthur Morris, panel chairman, cast the final vote tying it up, 5-5.

Panel member and Lancaster resident Thomas Smithgall said the NRC staff's environmental impact study, was a de facto endorsement of GPU Nuclear's evaporation proposal because it found

none of the options preferable.

"I just wonder what we're all doing here, quite honestly," Smithgall said. "Are we just playing a game here... where our comments will be collected in a document to collect dust?"

Whether panel members agreed with the scientists, Smithgall said the body "should opt to prevent any further potential releases. It's more of a moral issue, a political issue, an emotional issue that is about as basic as we can get," he said.

Panel member Thomas Gerusky, director of the state Bureau of Radiation Protection, said he found no fault with the NRC study "even though [the testimony] raised a lot of concerns and debate about off-site doses [of radiation]."

The panel endorsed the environmental impact study in a 7-2 vote.



The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Sept. 3, 1987

TMI owner reports higher net income

General Public Utilities Corp., owner of Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Londonderry Twp., reported yesterday that its net income for the first seven months of 1987 was \$168.4 million, or \$2.68 a share.

That compares with \$122.2 million, or \$1.94 a share, for the same period last year.

For the 12-month period that ended July 31, GPU reported net income of \$251.5 million, or \$4 a share, compared with \$169.1 million, or \$2.69 a share, for the year that ended July 31, 1986.

John F. O'Leary, GPU chairman and chief executive officer, said the earnings improvement resulted primarily because of base-rate increases received last year and an increase in kilowatt-hour sales.

He said the results for the year that ended July 31 reflect the return to service of the TMI Unit 1 reactor for the entire period. In the previous 12 months, the reactor had been in service for only nine months.

"Despite the earnings improvement, customer charges on an average cents-per-kilowatt-hour basis were 8 percent lower in the first seven months of this year than they were last year," O'Leary said. "This came about primarily as a result of lower energy costs that were passed on to customers."

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, June 19, 1987

Scientists' group accuses NRC of 'word engineering'

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's defense of Babcock & Wilcox nuclear reactors' safety is "a grossly superficial review," according to an anti-nuclear energy group.

The commission claims that operators of B&W plants, including GPU Nuclear Corp., which operates Three Mile Island, have

made significant improvements affecting plant safety, but the Union of Concerned Scientists called this claim "word engineering."

The anti-nuclear group petitioned the NRC in February to shut down all B&W reactors in the country until the commission could prove that these plants are safe. The scientists' group contends B&W reactors are flawed and prone to accidents.

The NRC responded that it

would review the UCS petition, but it refused to shut down the seven reactors.

In its response to the petition, the NRC said: "Almost 100 recommendations have been referred to the B&W plant owners, who have implemented or are implementing many of these recommendations."

The UCS said 95 recommendations were made, 89 of them voluntary.

One utility implemented about

25 percent of these recommendations while the other utilities implemented fewer, the group said. GPU Nuclear implemented seven of the 95 recommendations, according to the UCS.

"The NRC staff's response is a good example of its word engineering capabilities, but also indicates at best a grossly superficial review of the actual B&W owners' group recommendations. . .," the UCS said in a statement.

Issues argued in TMI evaporation proposal

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

Lawyers and a representative of two citizens' groups yesterday argued over what the valid legal issues are in the proposal to evaporate radioactive water generated in the 1979 Three Mile Island accident.

It will be up to the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, an advisory board to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, to decide which of these issues, if any, will be allowed in a regular hearing.

Frances Skolnick, representing two anti-nuclear power groups, TMI Alert and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance, presented the eight contentions that the groups

believe should prevent TMI's operator, GPU Nuclear Corp., from winning permission to evaporate the 2.3 million gallons of water.

Skolnick, who is not an attorney, was criticized frequently by GPU Nuclear's attorney, Thomas A. Baxter, and more mildly by NRC staff attorney Stephen H. Lewis for not providing enough detail and for arguing the technical merits of the evaporation plan when those arguments were supposed to be reserved for the full hearing, should the licensing board schedule one.

If the board admits some or all of the contentions into a later proceeding, the review process could drag well into next year, delaying GPU Nuclear's cleanup of the Unit

2 reactor. Originally, the company had hoped to have the evaporation plan approved by last July.

The licensing board acts as an adviser to the NRC commissioners, who will make the final decision regarding the evaporation plan.

If the licensing board denies all of TMIA/SVA's contentions, the NRC staff will brief the NRC commissioners directly and the commissioners will issue a decision on the plan.

Skolnick presented eight contentions on behalf of TMIA/SVA, and all of which were contested by GPU Nuclear and the NRC staff, which reviewed the evaporation plan and recommended its approval.

Those contentions include:

— In proposing to evaporate the water, GPU Nuclear and the NRC fail to follow the principle of keeping the release of radioactivity "as low as reasonably achievable."

— The NRC and GPU Nuclear failed to fully analyze the "no action alternative," in which the water would be kept on the island.

— It has not been proven that the benefits of evaporation will exceed the costs and risks to the public.

— Any plan to dispose of the water should be delayed until continuing studies on the adequacy of monitoring around the plant are completed.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, August 5, 1987.

TMI group seeks data on radiation

The Three Mile Island Public Health Fund is seeking unpublished radiation data from individuals who measured radioactivity before, during and after the 1979 accident at Unit 2.

Dr. Jan Beyea, principal investigator of the fund and senior staff scientist of the National Audubon Society, wants information from citizens who monitored radioactivity from February to May 1979 and were within a 25-mile radius of Harrisburg.

Beyea asked that anyone who wore a film badge or dosimeter during work or knows of any unpublished radiation data, send the information to Beyea at the National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

The TMI Public Health Fund was established as a result of a settlement of litigation surrounding the 1979 accident, and it is investigating possible health effects from the accident. The Audubon Society is housing the research program as a public service.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, August 4, 1987



"Be glad this is America, Wimbish... If it happened here we'd just raise the consumers' rates!"

A2—The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, Dec. 5, 1987

C

GPU to forgo restoring TMI Unit 2

Associated Press

Officials at General Public Utilities Corp. have ruled out any effort to restore or restart the damaged Unit 2 reactor at Three Mile Island for the immediate future, a spokesman said yesterday.

Assurances from GPU that the plant will remain dormant mark an abrupt departure from past positions. Company officials have long maintained that no decision had been made on the future of TMI-2.

The chairman of GPU, John F. O'Leary, told a meeting of security analysts in New York last week the company had "no plan for restoring TMI-2 to service and [is] not relying on TMI-2 in any way for future energy supply."

"Is there any possibility, any plan on the part of the company, of refurbishing that plant and putting it back into business as a nuclear plant? So long as I'm in charge of

this company, we're not going to spend any money at all toward that course," O'Leary said.

GPU is the parent company of the three utilities that jointly own TMI: Metropolitan Edison Co.; Pennsylvania Electric Co. and Jersey Central Power & Light Co.

Gary Plummer, a company spokesman, said O'Leary's remarks were "certainly a clear-cut statement of the immediate future of TMI-2 ... for the next five years."

O'Leary, who also serves as the company's chief executive officer, is expected to hold the reigns of the company until late 1992, when he will reach mandatory retirement age, Plummer said.

The Unit-2 reactor at Three Mile Island, which is in Londonderry Twp. along the Susquehanna River, gained international notoriety in 1979 when a combination of human and mechanical errors

led to a partial meltdown of the reactor.

A \$1 billion cleanup is expected to be completed late next year and then the plant is scheduled to go into long-term storage. Plummer said about \$91 million had been spent on the cleanup thus far in 1987.

In remarks to the New York Society of Security Analysts Nov. 25, O'Leary did not rule out the possibility the plant might one day be restarted.

"It may be that 10 or 15 years from now, your successor and my successor will sit here and decide ... in a totally different political environment, to go ahead and do something with that plant," he said.

In recent months, much of the controversy over TMI-2 has revolved around a request by the plant's operator, GPU Nuclear Corp., to evaporate about 2 million

gallons of radiation-laced water left over from the accident.

O'Leary also said he had assured Gov. Robert P. Casey about two months ago that no plans were being made to restart the plant. Casey officials declined immediate comment yesterday afternoon.

Various state, federal and nuclear industry experts have said it would be unlikely, and economically unfeasible, that the Unit 2 plant would ever be restarted. The plant's twin, TMI-1, was restarted in 1985 after being shut down after the accident.

Meanwhile, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced that it was cutting back its staff at TMI-2 in light of reduced safety and public health risks at the plant. Current staff includes a senior director and seven engineers and physicists. Beginning in February, staffing will be cut to two engineers.



Three Mile Island Alert

Island Updates

News Watch on the
Harrisburg Area

VOL. 7 NO. 1

MARCH - MAY 1987

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, March 25, 1987

TMI train collides with car

Officials report no radioactivity released in crash

From staff and wire reports

A train hauling nuclear waste from the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant to a federal repository in Idaho collided with an auto yesterday in St. Louis, but officials say no radioactivity was released.

The accident occurred at 5:35 a.m. at a grade crossing as the train was traveling at 25 to 30 mph, said Terry Smith of the U.S. Department of Energy, the agency that oversees the fuel shipment program from TMI.

Health officials from St. Louis and the state of Missouri checked the shipment for leaks of radioactivity. The train, carrying about 17,000 pounds of nuclear debris in two large casks, proceeded on its way about an hour later, Smith said.

The train consists of two engines and six cars. Patrolman Kevin Condon, who was at the scene, said the train's lead engine struck an automobile that was crossing the tracks even though warning lights and bells were on.

The driver of the auto said the signals had been malfunctioning recently, and he had thought such

was the case yesterday, Condon said. The driver was issued a citation for violating a railroad crossing signal, he said.

The driver, identified by Smith as Daryl Granberry, was taken to Barnes Hospital in St. Louis, where he was undergoing tests. A spokesman for the hospital said the man probably would be released later in the day.

The train was carrying the seventh rail shipment — the ninth and tenth cask loads — of radioactive waste left by the March 28, 1979, accident at TMI Unit 2. In the accident, the reactor's nuclear core lost vital cooling water, resulting in a partial meltdown.

Smith said he doesn't expect the accident to have an impact on the program in which about 40 rail shipments of the waste will be taken during the next two years from TMI to a DOE research laboratory near Idaho Falls, Idaho.

"It was a common accident. We feel like the safety system is in place to ship safely," he said. "I can't see any reason why it should have an impact."

The shipment is expected to reach its destination by tomorrow or Friday, a spokesman said.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa.,
Saturday, April 11, 1987

GPU Nuclear cited for pair of violations

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission cited GPU Nuclear Corp. with two severity-level-four violations after a late February to early March inspection.

One of the violations was issued because an instrument was not calibrated in accordance with proper procedure. GPU officials said the calibration was found to be satisfactory and the procedure has been rewritten.

A second violation was issued because a design calculation for the emergency feedwater system to the steam generators was changed without an internal review.

The change was since reviewed, GPU officials said.

At TMI-2, officials are continuing to review a March 18 incident in which two empty, but contaminated low-level radioactive waste containers were transported around the island on the bed of a truck without the required paperwork.

The containers were left unattended for 45 minutes in parts of the plant where continuous escort of radiological materials is required.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, April 21, 1987

3 TMI workers exposed to radiation, official says

Three workers breathed in radioactive material stirred up while they were in an auxiliary building at the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor, a company spokesman says.

The workers, who received doses of radiation far below federal limits, were exposed during two separate incidents while working in a cubicle that houses water filters used to cleanse reactor coolant water, said Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., TMI operator.

The incidents, which occurred on March 7 and 12 at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear power plant, recently were reported in a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission status report on Unit 1 for the period of March 6 to 20.

An internal investigation by GPU Nuclear has shown that the first exposure incident probably was avoidable, Tomb said. "In our review, we judged that the work in the cubicle was not planned out as thoroughly as it might have been," he said.

On March 7, GPU workers were practicing removal of the water filters from the cubicle in the auxiliary building. Two workers were inside the cubicle when other workers standing on the cu-

bicle's roof accidentally knocked a tool against an opening in the roof and dislodged cobalt, Tomb said.

The workers inside the cubicle were not wearing respirators, he said.

GPU Nuclear is studying ways to avoid similar incidents, but any solution is unlikely to include the wearing of respirators, which are uncomfortable, Tomb said.

Because reactor coolant water is filtered in the cubicle, contamination inside is unavoidable, Tomb said.

One of the workers exposed in the March 7 incident also was exposed in the March 12 incident, which took place in the same auxiliary building cubicle.

In this case, two workers were preparing a cask to accept the water filters by putting a plastic covering on the container to protect it from contamination, Tomb said. Once the cask is loaded with filters, it is shipped off for disposal of the filters, he said.

While cutting holes in the plastic, the workers again accidentally stirred up cobalt that was on a piece of equipment connected to the cask, Tomb said.

Tomb said the company will correct that problem.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa.,
Tuesday, June 2, 1987

Drug probe at TMI confirmed

GPU Nuclear Corp. confirmed yesterday it is investigating possible drug use by Three Mile Island employees.

"A drug investigation is under way and we will be providing further information on it when it is complete," said GPU spokesman Doug Bedell.

Bedell would say nothing further about the investigation at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant. "A report on it at this point ... could potentially damage the investigation," he said.

GPU spokesman Gordon Tomb would not identify the drugs or say whether the employees were suspected of using drugs on the job, but he did say the workers were not involved in reactor operation or other safety sensitive areas.

Glenn Schaeffer, business manager for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Harrisburg, said he was unaware of any drug probe at TMI. Joseph Kivler, president of IBEW Local 564 at TMI, could not be reached last night.

In February, the utility confirmed that such tests led to 30-day "disciplinary suspensions" of three employees.

Plans by the utility to implement random drug testing of union employees were blocked last year when the union filed a grievance and an arbitrator struck down the proposal.

TMI Gets Fire Rule Exemptions

By Leslie R. Klein
Intelligencer Journal Staff

GPU Nuclear Corp. has won federal approval for five exemptions from fire protection regulations that the company says would have cost millions of dollars to meet without adding to safety at Three Mile Island.

"Others have received similar exemptions," said Gordon Tomb, a GPU Nuclear spokesman. "... Plant safety remains our foremost concern."

Tomb said the company spent \$40 million improving the fire protection system at the Unit 1 reactor during a recent five-month shutdown.

But a spokesman for an anti-nuclear group criticized the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for granting the exemptions.

"The NRC is just impressed that the utility spent \$40 million, so the NRC appeases them," said Eric Epstein of TMI Alert.

"The NRC's business is ensuring safety. It should be making decisions that provide the greatest margins of safety possible instead of allowing the utility to take shortcuts."

Tomb said GPU Nuclear found "practical" alternatives to the fire protection systems mandated by the NRC regulations. The alternatives "provide equal protection," he said.

The systems called for by the regulations would have "cost millions without adding significantly to the safety to the plant," he added.

The NRC rules would have required automatic controls on some valves and pumps as well as automatic systems to extinguish fires in certain areas.

Tomb said the company believes it is "preferable" to implement regulations when possible by relying on the "fairly straightforward actions of trained operators" instead of on "equipment, which can fail."

The \$40 million already spent covered such changes as rerouting 16 miles of electrical cable, wrapping cable in fire resistant materials and building fire barriers.

Also included in the work was the installation of a "remote shutdown panel" that allows operators to shut the plant if the control room must be evacuated during a fire.

Tomb said engineers determined whether the alternatives would work by timing how long it would take operators to get from one area of the plant to another and by reviewing lab tests on how long it takes certain materials to burn.

Said Epstein: "It's just conjecture that it will work. None of these things have actually happened. We don't know what will happen."

The exemptions "assume that operators are adequately prepared through drills to handle a situation outside the lab," he added.

The NRC said GPU Nuclear's fire system gives "a high degree of assurance that a single fire will not result in loss of safe shutdown capability."

Epstein contended that neither TMI nor any other nuclear plant is equipped to handle two or more fires at the same time.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, March 10, 1987

'Someone' set off TMI firefighting system

Officials are trying to learn who activated a fire protection system at Three Mile Island's Unit 2 reactor Sunday night and why the system was set off when there was no fire.

The system was activated manually about 10:15 p.m. Sunday and discharged halon gas, a fire-suppression agent, into a room housing electrical cables, said Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp.

"We know it was set off by someone," Tomb said. "But we don't know who. We don't know why. We don't know how."

GPU Nuclear Corp. is reviewing the incident, which has been reported to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Tomb said the system was activated manually from outside the room. The halon gas which was discharged is stored in tanks in the room on the ground floor of the control building.

There were no injuries in the incident and no equipment was damaged, Tomb said.

A backup fire protection system remains available while the one activated Sunday is being returned to service.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, June 3, 1987

Fire brigade training scheduled at TMI

GPU Nuclear Corp. has scheduled fire brigade training for Tuesday and June 11 and 18 at Three Mile Island.

The training will involve the burning of flammable liquids, and residents in the area may notice smoke.



The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, May 8, 1987

Stockholder expresses anger over payment of GPU dividend

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

At least one General Public Utilities Corp. stockholder is unhappy about the payment this month of GPU's first common stock dividend since the March 1979 accident at TMI Unit 2.

Some stockholders may be unhappy that the 15-cent dividend is too small, but Eric Epstein is unhappy that he's getting one at all.

Epstein is a member of the Harrisburg anti-nuclear group Three Mile Island Alert and a GPU stockholder.

Epstein says the utility should not be paying stockholders a dividend because the future of the cleanup of the damaged Unit 2 reactor is uncertain.

"There are no assurances that Unit 2 will ever be completely cleaned up, decontaminated and decommissioned, yet GPU is rewarding its shareholders for the progress made in the cleanup," Epstein said yesterday.

The company announced last month that it will pay a 15-cent dividend on common stock — the first since the accident — on May 29.

The dividend, company officials said at the time, was prompted by progress in the \$1 billion cleanup program of Unit 2.

"GPU's mismanagement of the cleanup casts a shadow on its ability to complete the project," Epstein said. "In fact, the next phase of the cleanup, referred to as post defueling monitored storage, is nothing more than a guise for GPU to renege on its pledge to safely clean up and decontaminate Unit 2," he said.

Epstein said examples of mismanagement at GPU Nuclear included the case where the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission levied a \$64,000 fine over allegations a utility subcontractor harassed an employee for reporting safety problems and another case where GPU paid a \$40,000 fine for improperly modifying reactor head lift equipment.

Epstein, who was in attendance at a GPU stockholders' meeting in Whippany, N.J., yesterday, said dividend payments should not come until cleanup completion is more certain.

the FORUM

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa.,
Monday, April 20, 1987

TMI drug test

EDITOR:

I want to know why Three Mile Island was allowed to continue operating after marijuana was found and the Peach Bottom plant was shut down when workers were found sleeping on the job. It is my opinion that drug use in a nuclear power plant is totally unacceptable, and certainly as dangerous as sleeping attendants.

I hope that it won't take another accident to shut down TMI or tighten safety standards. I think that all employees working there should be tested for drugs regularly. Lives are at stake!

Deborah Bixler,
Dillsburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa.,
Friday, March 13, 1987

TMI worker hospitalized after gas leak

Three Mile Island Unit 1 officials last night were monitoring a small chlorine gas leak yesterday that sent one worker to Harrisburg Hospital.

Douglas Bedell, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., operator of TMI, said the leak began about 2:15 p.m. in the chlorinator building near the Susquehanna River bank on the west side of the island.

Bedell said the leak occurred as a result of increased pressure in the building, but officials did not know last night what caused the pressure to rise.

The chlorinator building adds chlorine to water pumped in from the river for use at Unit 1.

GPU Nuclear Corp. workers were required to wear breathing equipment to enter the building.

One worker, William Fraser, 35, of Columbia was admitted to Harrisburg Hospital after being examined for exposure to the gas. He was listed in fair condition last night, a hospital official said.

Bedell said the leak posed no environmental hazard and no danger to Unit 1.

Although the incident was not serious enough to be classified as an "unusual event," Bedell said the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission resident staffers were notified.

Scientist: GPU's evaporation plan may kill babies

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

Twenty to 120 infants could be killed if GPU Nuclear Corp. is allowed to evaporate radioactive water into the midstate air, a scientist said last night.

Dr. Ernest Sternglass, who made that assessment, and another scientist addressed an advisory panel on TMI Unit 2's cleanup process.

The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination for Three Mile Island Unit 2 voted to recommend against two alternatives for disposal of radioactive water stored at the Londonderry Twp. plant. The panel met at Holiday Inn Center City.

The panel, in separate votes, unanimously opposed dumping the water in the Susquehanna River and voted 5-4, with one abstention, against GPU Nuclear Corp.'s proposal to evaporate the 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water into the air at the Londonderry Twp. plant.

The advisory panel meets with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Washington April 16 to deliver its recommendations. The NRC has final authority on disposal of the water.

The panel votes came after a five-hour meeting in which Sternglass, professor of radiological physics at the University of Pittsburgh, and Dr. Richard Piccioni, staff scientist for New York-based Accord Research and Educational Associates Inc., told the advisory panel research has linked even low levels of strontium-90 and other radionuclides that are in the water to cancers, cancer deaths and infant mortality.

Sternglass' remarks were made to reporters after his formal presentation and were based, he said, on reports of illness and deaths in upstate New York and Maryland after the 1980 venting of krypton gas from TMI.

Sternglass also said 100 to 500 people who are ill could die prematurely as a result of deficient immune systems after absorbing such radiation.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff, in an environmental impact study, ruled that none of the 10 options they considered for disposal of the water — including GPU Nuclear Corp.'s evaporation plan — posed any health or environmental danger.

Most of the panel members with technical expertise — Dr. Neil Wald, Joseph J. DiNunno and Dr. John Luetzelbach — appeared to discount the testimony of Sternglass and Piccioni.



Sternglass

Wald summed up his opinion after the meeting this way: "Because we cannot at very low levels demonstrate effect [of radiation], it becomes a matter of assumption. Their assumptions [Sternglass and Piccioni] are not in keeping with the consensus of the experts," Wald said.

Sternglass said there was a clear increase in infant mortality in the second half of 1980 after the venting of krypton gas. Piccioni earlier told the panel his organization detected levels of strontium-90 in the air during the krypton gas venting that were 900 times higher than what GPU predicted or picked up in its own monitoring.

After presenting a host of charts and study summaries tying low-level radiation to illness and death, Sternglass said: "I must warn you, this does not constitute absolute proof. It's only a probability, a likelihood that this [illness and deaths] is caused by radiation."

"I cannot tell what this means," he said. "I cannot tell you whether to believe the projections of the industry or independent scientists. We both have our biases. You have to decide, in the light of probability, like a jury, whether I may be right."

Sternglass, Piccioni and various members of the public recommended that the water — generated in the March 1979 Unit 2 accident — be maintained in storage tanks on the island.

A motion to recommend to the NRC to maintain the water on the island pending further study was defeated when Lancaster Mayor Arthur Morris, panel chairman, cast the final vote tying it up, 5-5.

Panel member and Lancaster resident Thomas Smithgall said the NRC staff's environmental impact study, was a de facto endorsement of GPU Nuclear's evaporation proposal because it found none of the options preferable.

"I just wonder what we're all doing here, quite honestly," Smithgall said. "Are we just playing a game here ... where our comments will be collected in a document to collect dust?"

Whether panel members agreed with the scientists, Smithgall said the body "should opt to prevent any further potential releases. It's more of a moral issue, a political issue, an emotional issue that is about as basic as we can get," he said.

Panel member Thomas Gerusky, director of the state Bureau of Radiation Protection, said he found no fault with the NRC study "even though [the testimony] raised a lot of concerns and debate about off-site doses [of radiation]."

The panel endorsed the environmental impact study in a 7-2 vote.

More opinions asked on TMI plan

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, exhibiting what some officials believe is a newfound concern for public opinion, wants a better reading of the public on a plan to evaporate radioactive water at Three Mile Island.

This week, members of the TMI Advisory Panel told the NRC that those who attended the panel's hearings rejected absolutely any plan to evaporate 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water generated by the 1979 accident and subsequent cleanup of Unit 2.

However, when the NRC members asked if this opposition represented the majority opinion, the advisory panel was stumped.

"We could not answer that question sufficiently," said Joel Roth, vice chairman of the panel. "Is there really a silent majority out there who just want this over with?"

Roth and Dauphin County commissioners' Chairman Frederick S. Rice yesterday announced the panel would hold another public hearing in late May or early June to try to provide the NRC with an adequate response.

The NRC has delayed making a final judgment on the evaporation plan until more public comment is solicited.

The advisory panel was created by the NRC expressly to keep the agency informed of public sentiment.

However, until the hearing in Washington on Thursday, Roth said he never witnessed such a level of concern for the public.

"A number of [NRC members] really care about this issue," Roth said, later adding, "we really didn't expect them to say what they said."

The advisory panel held two public hearings earlier this year to solicit public opinion on the proposal by GPU Nuclear Corp., operator of the Londonderry Twp. plant, to boil the water and release the steam into the atmosphere.

The first meeting, in Lancaster, and the second, in Harrisburg, were well attended, and the overwhelming majority opposed evaporation.

However, anti-nuclear activists dominated the discussions, particularly at the Harrisburg meeting, and apparently NRC members do not believe these activists represent a cross-section of the community.

That belief, Roth said, is shared by some of his fellow panel members.

"Some members of our panel feel we haven't gotten a good cross-section," he said. "But I object to our anti-nuclear friends being castigated because they did keep showing up at the meetings."

The advisory panel chairman, Lancaster Mayor Arthur Morris, wrote to the NRC, saying the proposal favored by most citizens is to continue storing the water on the island. However, this option has been criticized by some, who say it would turn TMI into a low-level radioactive waste site.

Roth said he was unsure how the advisory panel would attract a more diverse group to comment on the evaporation plan, but he added that, unless other proposals are made, the NRC is likely to go ahead with GPU Nuclear's plan.

"The public has really been taken for granted because GPU has never asked the public what it wants," Roth said. "Never."

Advisory panel to urge delay on plan to evaporate tainted TMI water

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

LANCASTER — The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination of Three Mile Island Unit 2 has recommended that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission delay action on a plan to evaporate tainted water at the plant site.

Acting on a consensus of board members' opinions, panel Chairman Arthur Morris said last night the NRC should study GPU Nuclear Corp.'s plan and complete the second part of an environmental impact study before approving any water removal.

GPU Nuclear, operator of TMI, has asked to be allowed to evaporate through boiling 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water at the Londonderry Twp. plant this year.

The NRC has not given approval to the move and asked the advisory panel to suggest a time frame for removing the water.

Citizens who spoke last night at the panel's hearing on the matter had urged that the plan be delayed indefinitely.

The advisory panel has had several

meetings on how to dispose of the water, some of which was generated in 1979 during the nation's worst commercial nuclear accident.

Some of it has been used in cleanup since the accident.

After reviewing an environmental impact statement prepared by the NRC staff, the advisory panel voted unanimously in March against allowing GPU to dump the water in the Susquehanna River.

The panel also voted 5-4 with one abstention to oppose GPU's evaporation plan.

The environmental impact statement showed none of the options for removing the water represented radiation releases to the environment beyond federal limits.

GPU last night said it told the NRC that it must have approval by July 31 to complete its cleanup on schedule.

After a panel discussion, Morris, who also is mayor of Lancaster, said he would tell the NRC the panel would provide no advice on timing but recommend they finish their impact study before approving any cleanup plan.

NRC leaks

Agency chummy with industry it oversees

ONE OF THE victims of the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island was public confidence in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its commitment to fulfilling its role as the watchdog of the nuclear industry. The doubts and suspicions were confirmed recently when a Senate committee heard sworn testimony that top officials in the NRC alerted electric utilities about pending investigations and otherwise compromised their responsibility as independent regulators.

Julian Greenspun, a former federal prosecutor, told how the NRC's executive director for operations, Victor Stello Jr., quashed an investigation of falsified coolant-leak test results at General Public Utilities' Unit 2 TMI reactor that occurred for six months in 1978 with the knowledge of an NRC inspector. Stello, he said, objected that the investigation would be bad for plant morale and was quoted as saying, "Nobody is going to tell me how to treat my licensees."

That was hardly an isolated example, either. There was testimony suggesting that Commissioner Thomas M. Roberts provided confidential documents to another utility under investigation. Roberts denied supplying the documents but admitted that he subsequently destroyed the seized papers because he believed someone was trying to frame him. But Ben B. Hayes, the agency's top investigator, told the Senate Government Affairs Committee, that the effect of Roberts' document destruction was to thwart an in-house investigation of himself.

SEN. JOHN HEINZ, R-Pa., raised an obvious question in light of these revelations: Was the recent shutdown by the NRC of the Peach Bottom nuclear power station in York County a "flash in the pan" meant to curry favor with Congress? Was that action, which we lauded in this space, an attempt at damage control designed to defuse the very

serious allegations of being in bed with the nuclear industry that NRC officials must have known were about to descend upon them? The circumstances surrounding the NRC's unprecedented action certainly suggest as much.

Greenspun's charge that the NRC is "a captive of the industry it regulates" is hardly new nor one that only the NRC has had to face. The NRC was formed out of the old Atomic Energy Commission in the early 1970s because of the inherent conflict of trying to have one agency both promote and regulate the nuclear industry. But the problem appears to be generic in that regulators, whatever the field, invariably develop institutional sympathies for the industry they are supposed to oversee. The Interstate Commerce Commission, for example, is generally perceived to be a captive of the railroad industry.

AT ISSUE THEN is how to combat this tendency; how, in fact, to keep the regulatory system honest. Even the presence of an internal Office of Investigations in the NRC for the last four years and a man in charge of it — Hayes — who was serious and dedicated to his task wasn't sufficient to maintain the integrity of the system. But public exposure of the NRC's unacceptable conduct may help if it results in appropriate sanctions for those responsible.

Whatever the eventual remedy, ultimately the nuclear industry is bound to pay a big price for small favors. For all its exhaustiveness, for all of the time and delay consumed by the NRC in passing on the question of restart of the undamaged reactor at TMI, the agency did more to undermine public confidence than enhance it because it could not hide its contempt for public opinion. But in a democracy, even one that depends on highly sophisticated technology, public opinion is the bottom line.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, April 22, 1987

Sen. Glenn wants NRC member to quit

By Peter Kelley
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. John Glenn yesterday called for the resignation of Thomas M. Roberts from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The Ohio Democrat also spoke of possible criminal investigation of Roberts, who has been a member of the NRC for six years.

"The NRC and the public it serves cannot afford to retain a commissioner whose consistently poor judgment could potentially jeopardize the safe regulation of the nuclear power industry," Glenn said.

Roberts, 50, a Memphis, Tenn., investor and businessman who was treasurer of Vice President George Bush's 1980 presidential campaign, responded that he has no intention of resigning and was "truly shocked" at Glenn's demand.

Roberts said he asked in-house inspectors last week to find out how copies of confidential memos meant for his office reached a nuclear utility's files within four working days in June 1983, where they were discovered in 1985.

In sworn testimony April 9 before Glenn's Government Affairs Committee, Roberts said he did not

leak the memos, one of which charged NRC collusion with Middle South Services Inc., owner of a Louisiana nuclear plant.

But he admitted he ordered NRC investigators to turn over the discovered copies, as well as all their notes on the incident, then tore them up and threw them in a wastebasket.

"I saw no reason for them [the documents] to continue to exist," Roberts told the senators. "I admit to being somewhat paranoid. I thought somebody was trying to set me up."

He maintained yesterday, "I have done no wrong."

The five NRC members and their staff regulate America's 106 licensed nuclear power plants, which produce 20 percent of the nation's electricity. Of the three in central Pennsylvania, Three Mile Island, near Middletown, was the site of the nation's worst nuclear accident, and Peach Bottom, near Delta, was the only plant ever ordered closed solely for bad management.

Glenn charged Roberts' actions were "deliberate destruction of incriminating evidence" on the eve of Roberts' Senate reconfirmation in July 1985 to a second term on the NRC.

"I am sending this entire matter, including the testimony from the committee's April 9 hearing, to the Department of Justice for its review," Glenn said.

One of the memos called for an NRC investigation into whether Middle South's plant operators tried to conceal cracks in its concrete base.

NRC spokesman Frank Ingram, asked why Roberts waited until last week to call for a probe of how the memo leaked, replied: "All he said is that, in retrospect, he probably should have done it two years ago."

Roberts' denials were lampooned in New Orleans, near the Middle South plant. A cartoonist for The Times-Picayune newspaper drew an NRC member at dinner, calmly watching a dog marked "NukePlants" climb on the table and eat from a guest's plate.

"If I hadn't grown so fond of that mutt, I'd probably discipline him," the commissioner tells the guest in the cartoon.

A justice spokesman said Roberts' case probably would be reviewed for a possible probe by the department's Office of Professional Responsibility, which investigates charges of official misconduct.

Meanwhile, new allegations of "cozy" relations between the NRC and power companies were made yesterday in Congress, just as NRC Chairman Lando W. Zech Jr. promised to clean house and reopen several investigations into complaints of misconduct.

Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., charged that Victor Stello, NRC executive director for operations, "coached and advised" owners of the Seabrook plant in New Hampshire on winning an operating license.

Stello said he was just trying to be helpful.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, April 3, 1987

Asleep at the switch

NRC blows whistle on Peach Bottom

BY SHUTTING DOWN the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in York County, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission should get the attention of operator Philadelphia Electric Co. that warnings and fines apparently have failed to obtain.

In an action without precedent, the NRC Tuesday ordered PE to bring its Unit 3 reactor to a "cold condition" within 36 hours after finding it posed "an immediate threat to the public safety and health." The federal agency, which is responsible for overseeing nuclear power operations, said control-room operators were asleep on the job and otherwise inattentive to their duties.

This is not the first time that Peach Bottom's two nuclear reactors have been cited as problem plants. They were on a list of 16 reactors with significant operating problems — out of the more than 100 nuclear power plants on line in the country — compiled by the NRC last year. The company was fined \$200,000 last year for a safety violation committed by one of its operators that went undetected through three separate safety systems designed to catch it. In 1983 and 1984, PE was assessed a total of \$170,000 for five separate violations of safety standards at Peach Bottom.

THESE BREACHES in safety have been taking place at reactors whose "Mark I" design, according to the staff of the NRC in a statement made last year, have a 50 percent chance of failure in the event of an accident involving damage to the core. The staff, in calling for modifications in the containment structures at the Peach Bottom reactors, said that in the event of an accident it was highly likely that radioactive steam would escape.

In addition, last year PE laid off a health physicist working at Peach Bottom after he

complained to the NRC about being exposed to what he believed to be excessive levels of radiation. And according to Critical Mass, a nuclear-watchdog group, Unit 2 at Peach Bottom had 16 unplanned shutdowns in 1985, among the highest in the industry.

All of this taken together paints a disturbing picture of inattention, complacency and lax supervision at the power station near the Maryland border. It is hauntingly reminiscent of the conclusion of the Kemeny Commission investigation of the accident at Three Mile Island that its fundamental cause was "people-related," not due to equipment problems. The difference is that the NRC has intervened forcefully before PE's negligence in operating Peach Bottom resulted in a serious accident.

THAT IS NOT entirely reassuring, however, in light of the fact that the actions that led to the shutdown had been occurring at the facility for the preceding five months. That suggests a need for more frequent unannounced inspections by the NRC and much closer supervision and better training by the company.

The operation of a nuclear plant places an enormous amount of public trust and responsibility on the operator. It has an obligation to see that a potentially dangerous technology is operated attentively, safely and prudently at all times. PE has failed that trust and should be dealt with severely, both by the NRC and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, which must decide who bears the price of taking the 1,000-megawatt power plant out of service.

PE should not be permitted to resume operations at Peach Bottom until it provides ample evidence that it is prepared to operate the facility in a responsible manner.

Reconsider, TMI plaintiffs ask

Lawyers for people seeking damages as a result of the March 1979 Three Mile Island accident have asked for a reconsideration of a court decision that dismissed some 35 complaints.

They also have asked Dauphin County Senior Judge William W. Lipsitt to stay his Feb. 20 decision, in order to avoid filing an appeal with the state Superior Court.

The motions are part of a virtual avalanche of legal filings submitted this week in the massive TMI litigation.

About 2,000 people have sued the owners and manufacturers of the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant to recover damages from injuries they say they have incurred as a result of the March 28, 1979, accident. The plaintiffs contend the accident caused various ailments, such as cancer.

The defendants in the suits have argued that not enough radiation was released to harm anyone.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs have asked Lipsitt to reconsider his Feb. 20 decision that dismissed some of the complaints because they were not filed within the two-year statute of limitations.

In the reconsideration motion, plaintiffs' lawyers have argued that many of the suits were filed in a timely fashion and the complaints should be reinstated. Besides asking for reinstatement, the plaintiffs' lawyers are asking that Lipsitt amend the complaints to include a list of reasons explaining why people did not immediately connect their injuries to the TMI accident. A request to amend all the TMI complaints was filed earlier this month.

In asking for reconsideration,

the lawyers said Lipsitt's decision "sends a clear message to the community. The message is clearly akin to buyer beware. It is a docket-oriented message which sends a signal to corporate America that they can maintain a community and groups of individuals, be it by the sale of asbestos, a defective IUD, and/or radiation with impunity."

"All they have to do is withhold information, lull the consumer and/or community into a false sense of security, and when they are caught in their deceit plead the statute of limitations, placing the burden on the private citizen to perform extensive and costly studies to determine corporate guilt while at the same time they withhold such information from the public which prevents the investigation from beginning."

The reconsideration motion says that each individual affected by Lipsitt's order had read "articles and heard broadcasting reports attesting to the fact that no harm would come" from the accident.

But, the motion adds, the "defendants, as evidenced by the proposed amendment, concealed the effects of the disaster at Three Mile Island by propaganda, disreputable news releases, payments of \$380,000 to Adm. [Hyman] Rickover's foundation to gain his support . . . attempts to curtail funding for the public health fund reports in the United States District Court here in Harrisburg, thwarting plaintiffs' ability to obtain grand jury documents, and being obstinate on production of discovery in these very cases."

Regarding some specific cases affected by Lipsitt's ruling, the lawyers contend some complaints

were dismissed even though a request for summary judgment had not been filed.

Another person, the motion said, had his suit thrown out even though he started action in 1985 within two months after he was diagnosed as having skin cancer. The man had said in interrogatories that he had warts in 1981 and the defendants argued that he "should have started his lawsuit when he noticed a wart."

In a footnote, the reconsideration motion observes that "this scenario would cause everyone within a 25-mile radius of Three Mile Island to begin suits for every skin blemish that they witnessed. It is proof positive that each individual case deserves its own analysis. It shows clearly how defendants' tact in filing a motion for summary judgment and misleading this court with regard to the same will cause havoc with this litigation."

In other requests before the court, the plaintiffs' lawyers have asked Lipsitt to postpone acting on their reconsideration motion pending a ruling in a higher court on a request for discovery information sought from the TMI operator.

The plaintiffs have taken issue with Lipsitt's Jan. 15 decision saying that TMI officials should produce all news releases and certify that they have released all available information regarding emissions through April 1979.

Plaintiffs' lawyers are seeking transcripts of all news conferences and all notes used in preparing news conferences.

TMI officials have said they already have produced the transcripts and notes used in the news conferences.

Lipsitt order amends suits related to TMI

Dauphin County Senior Judge William W. Lipsitt has signed an order to amend complaints filed by most of the 2,000 people seeking damages as a result of the Three Mile Island accident.

Lipsitt's order, recorded Friday in the county prothonotary's office, will change the complaints to reflect alleged emissions of radioactivity before the March 28, 1979, accident at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear power plant.

The order also will amend the complaints to strengthen a contention that TMI's owners and operator fraudulently concealed information. The concealment, the amendment claims, prevented people from making an immediate connection between their injuries and the accident.

About 2,000 people have sued the builders and operator of the plant for damages they say they suffered as a result of the accident. They contend radiation releases caused a variety of mental and physical ailments, such as cancer and stress.

GPU Nuclear Corp., the plant operator, has said not enough radiation was released to harm anyone.

The amendment concerning prior emissions, which will affect about 1,500 complaints, argues there were radiation emissions from Oct. 17, 1974, until the time of the accident.

The amendment says radiation-detecting equipment measured doses in excess of 1 rem Oct. 17, 1974. "Since that time, there were additional releases up to and including the date" of the accident, the amendment says.

Another paragraph is amended to allege that the TMI operator withheld information from the public and the news media to conceal the extent of the accident.

GPU Nuclear concealed severity of TMI accident, lawyers claim

By Jim Lewis
Patriot-News

Lawyers filed pages of news stories and advertisements yesterday in Dauphin County Court to support their claims that officials at Three Mile Island concealed the severity of the 1979 accident at the nuclear power plant.

The papers were filed in an attempt to convince Senior Judge William W. Lipsitt to reconsider his Feb. 20 dismissal of about 35 cases seeking damages as a result of the accident at the Londonderry Twp. plant.

The exhibits were part of a thick document filed by lawyers for plaintiffs in the cases that were dismissed.

Another document filed asks Lipsitt to reconsider his decision to deny the plaintiffs a chance to amend their complaints.

Lipsitt ruled earlier that the plaintiffs had failed to file their injury claims within a two-year statute of limitations.

The plaintiffs claim they could not determine a connection between their ailments and the March 28, 1979, accident at the Unit 2 reactor because GPU Nuclear Corp., TMI operator, fraudulently concealed the severity of the radiation emissions in ads and during news conferences.

They list about 30 examples of advertising and media reports that they contend show GPU Nuclear and some manufacturers of parts used in TMI's reactors downplayed the severity of the accident.

The stories and ads made people believe their ailments might not have been caused by the accident until recent reports indicated otherwise, the lawyers claim.

Lipsitt ruled in February that the "plaintiffs knew on March 28, 1979, that an accident had occurred at TMI. They also knew or should have known that exposure to radiation could cause adverse health effects."

"Given the extent of information available to plaintiffs, their generalized allegations of concealment are insufficient. . . and their claims must be dismissed as untimely filed," he wrote.

The lawyers say Lipsitt incorrectly ruled that their clients must prove their claims against GPU

Nuclear are adequate, in light of the statute of limitations defense, before they can file amended complaints.

"At the time a plaintiff files his complaint, he is unaware whether the defendant will raise the statute of limitations defense and is therefore unable to plead any facts related to an exception to that defense," the document says. "The proper remedy . . . is to allow an amendment to the pleadings, not to deny plaintiffs the opportunity to correct the recognized deficiency."

TMI Cleanup Needs Extra \$2-\$5 Million

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal researchers said Wednesday they will need up to \$5 million more to finish investigating the accident that crippled Three Mile Island's Unit 2 eight years ago.

To see the bottom of the reactor vessel, researchers will need \$2 million to \$5 million more than the cleanup budget allows, James Vaught of the Department of Energy told the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Scientists consider a picture of the depths of the vessel critical in piecing together the events at the Pennsylvania plant in March 1979.

"I can't imagine that with a one-of-a-kind accident, we would not learn everything that we possibly can on the progression and the circumstances surrounding that accident, and how close we may have come to breaching the bottom of the vessel," NRC Commissioner Frederick Bernthal said.

"Is there any reason to think it's not important to understand exactly how hot it was at the bottom (and) what the material was that came in contact with the bottom?" he said.

The department planned to spend \$189 million over the life of the \$1 billion TMI cleanup.

"If we have to go the Congress, I'm personally prepared to do it myself," Bernthal said.

Before researchers can gain access to the bottom of the vessel, they must wait until all the damaged fuel is removed. The DOE has removed about a third of the 290,000 pounds of fuel and metal debris to a federal laboratory in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

During the accident, a combination of human and mechanical error allowed the reactor to overheat. Portions of the core melted and apparently slid into the bottom of the vessel and resolidified, according to James Broughton of EG&G Idaho, an Energy Department contractor.

Request for accounting of TMI health and economic funds denied

By Connie McNamara
Patriot-News

A federal court judge has denied a request by a group of local officials asking that an accounting of the Three Mile Island Public Health and Economic Loss funds be published in local newspapers.

The judge also denied the officials' request that \$600,000 from the Public Health Fund be earmarked for the purchase of radiation-monitoring equipment.

The funds were established as part of a class-action suit settlement in 1981.

U.S. District Judge Sylvia H. Rambo, in an order made available yesterday, denied several aspects of the petition filed by the officials in April.

In response to another request by the petitioners, Rambo ordered that the fund's administrator file the results of two radiation monitoring studies with the court within 90 days unless a good cause can be shown for not doing so.

A similar petition had been filed by officials in October, but was rejected in January for procedural reasons.

Public officials who submitted the April petition were state Sen. John Shumaker, R-Grantville; state Reps. Peter C. Wambach Jr., D-Harrisburg, and Bruce Smith, R-Newberry Twp.; City Councilwoman Harriet Braxton; and Dauphin County Commissioner Frederick S. Rice and former Dauphin County Commissioner Larry J. Hochendoner. The petitioners claim to represent the interests of class members living within a 25-mile radius of TMI, site of a March 29, 1979, accident.

A federal class-action suit resulted in a \$20 million settlement for economic losses resulting from the accident and \$5 million for public health studies to support research and education on radiation.

Rice, contacted about the decision yesterday, said he was "very disappointed."

He said that millions of dollars were set aside in the funds, and the public deserves a full accounting of it.

"I don't think we should stop here," Rice said, adding that the petitioners would have to confer on what actions to take next.

Smith, who also expressed disappointment, said that despite Rambo's decision, he still believes that petitioners were right in their requests.

Rambo, in a memorandum attached to her order, wrote that to grant the request to allocate \$600,000 for the monitoring equipment would mean freezing money already committed to other projects, since there was not \$600,000 that was unaccounted for remaining in the fund.

"Each of the projects to which funds have been committed has been judged by this court to be in advancement of the purposes of the Public Health Fund," Rambo wrote. "To reallocate funds from those projects would undermine their value."

The petitioners also requested the court appoint a custodian to produce an accounting of both the Economic Loss and Public Health funds and asked that the accounts be published as paid advertisements in local daily and weekly newspapers.

Rambo wrote that the firm of Philadelphia lawyer David Berger, who is administrator of the TMI funds, submitted an accounting of the Public Health Fund to the court April 27. An accounting of the Economic Loss Fund has also been included in an unrelated petition to the court concerning claims to be paid.

Since both accountings are now a matter of public record, "...to order the publication of the accounting, in four newspapers once weekly for three weeks would impose an unnecessary expense" upon the funds, Rambo wrote.

Petitioners also asked the court to remove Berger as administrator of the Public Health Fund and appoint a special master who would be required to submit bimonthly reports on the fund's interest earnings, disbursements paid and the status of other disbursement proposals.

In denying that request, Rambo wrote that Berger has acted within his authority as administrator. As for the petitioners' argu-

ment that the Berger firm contributed to delays in the administration of the fund, Rambo wrote that naming someone else to take his place would only cause further delays.

The petitioners' also asked for a five-year extension for requests for public health fund proposals if any money remains uncommitted in the fund. Rambo denied the request and wrote that since the small portion of the fund remaining will probably be used for administrative expenses arising from the fund's project and to pay Berger's fees, it was "unlikely" that the remaining money could be used for new funding proposals. Also, agreements are already in place which would govern the use of spillover money from the Economic Loss Fund, Rambo wrote.

A spokeswoman for TMI-Alert, an anti-nuclear group, said one of the main questions that has not adequately been addressed by Berger or the court is the matter of the substantial interest that must have been earned on the money in the funds.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, April 9, 1987

Ruling upheld in case of ex-TMI instructor

By Peter Kelley
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — A federal judge has upheld the ban of a former training supervisor at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant from holding such jobs because of "a bad attitude."

In an April 2 ruling made available yesterday, Administrative Law Judge Morton B. Margulies cited Charles Husted for "flippancy" and "disdain" toward federal investigators looking into cheating on reactor operator tests.

Margulies found "no convincing evidence" that Husted, on an April 1981 senior reactor operator exam, meant to cheat by exclaiming "What ... does this mean?" upon reading a question about the theory of thermodynamics that he answered incorrectly.

The judge also found Husted's regular job performance acceptable, saying it "reflected very positively on his attitude" and did nothing to question his honesty.

However, he said Husted's conduct under later questioning could not be excused by physical and emotional stress, and criticized Husted for not changing his attitude sufficiently even during appeals of his case.

Margulies' 72-page decision, issued at NRC headquarters in Bethesda, Md., upheld previous rulings by the TMI-1 Licensing Board, another appointed judge, and an appeal board. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 1985 had allowed the second appeal.

It was a victory for the NRC staff and Three Mile Island Alert, the Harrisburg-based anti-nuclear group that recently celebrated its 10th anniversary.

As the series of appeals dragged on for years, TMIA was represented by Louise Bradford of Harrisburg, who was working as a waitress when she first got involved in TMI-related cases and picked up legal knowledge as she went along.

It was a setback for GPU Nuclear Corp., which operates the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant, and for Husted — promoted by the

company in 1984 from training reactor operators to supervising training of other plant workers during its drive to restart the Unit 1 reactor.

GPU Nuclear did so to meet objections from the state of Pennsylvania and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, but was criticized for the move anyway.

The judge ruled that Husted may not work as a licensed reactor operator, a licensed operator trainer or a supervisor of either licensed or non-licensed training, deciding Husted:

— Failed to cooperate with NRC investigators by refusing at first to answer questions about gossip he had heard near the coffee pot and men's room that two other operators were seen "passing papers" in an exam.

Husted in later hearings called the questions about rumors "stupid," and complained he had been attacked rather than cross-examined.

The judge said Husted's answers showed "a lack of reliability, credibility and responsibility" and "a resistance to testifying."

— Was not "forthright" during the investigation, citing as a "glaring example" this exchange during a sworn statement in October 1981:

Attorney: "May I ask you, what happens to fuel pin temperature over core life if an oxidizing layer builds up on the cladding surface?"

Husted: "No, you may not."

Attorney: "You don't know the answer?"

Husted: "Of course I know the answer. I think it's a ridiculous question. You asked me if you may ask me and my answer is you may not."

The question was rephrased and Husted replied correctly, "It increases."

Husted later said he got off on the wrong foot, acknowledging his answers were "cute" and saying he lost his temper because he had to wait more than two hours.

He has 30 days to appeal the case to the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, March 10, 1987

Last awards granted from TMI loss fund

By Tom Dochat
Patriot-News

Five unresolved claims in the Three Mile Island Economic Loss Fund were settled yesterday in U.S. Middle District Court.

Judge Sylvia H. Rambo approved awards totaling \$650,108 for the five business or real estate losses.

The largest award totaled \$514,726 for Harry Cramer Inc., a Middletown-area automobile dealership. The company had been seeking an award of slightly more than \$1 million.

Next largest was a \$127,000 award to the former Cumberland Skatium of Lower Allen Twp. The owner had claimed a real estate loss of \$457,000.

Yesterday's awards are said to be the final business or real estate claims to be resolved before Rambo.

The awards come out of the \$20 million economic loss fund established in 1981 as part of a settlement in a federal class-action lawsuit. Parties with business or real estate losses resulting from the March 1979 TMI accident had until April 1982 to seek reimbursement from the fund.

Rambo fixed the award to Cramer by comparing the company's yearly losses from 1979 to early 1982 with the average net profit in 1977 and 1978.

The fund's executive committee originally had awarded Cramer \$445,000, but the company felt its loss was closer to \$1 million.

A company representative testified Feb. 25 that many people stayed away from the dealership in the aftermath of the TMI accident when they learned it was less than three miles from the Londonderry Twp. reactor.

Rambo's award to the Cumberland Skatium was computed as the difference between the property's appraised value in May 1978 and its sale price.

She noted the appraisal totaled \$1.9 million and the sale price was \$1.7 million. This created a loss of \$200,000, but a \$73,000 depreciation — made by the claimant on tax returns — was deducted to leave an award of \$127,000.

The three other awards were: — \$4,200 to Mr. and Mrs. John Borelli of 5728 Crickett Lane, Lower Paxton Twp., for what they claimed as a decrease in their property's real estate value. Rambo affirmed the award issued by the fund's committee.

— \$4,032 to Robert Wagner of Hanover for the loss of real estate value of 14 lots he owns.

— \$150 for a real estate loss claimed by Mary Osborne, who said her vegetable garden was contaminated by radioactive fallout.

Previous distributions of business loss claims include the following: June 18, 1986, five claims totaling \$338,218; Nov. 14, 1986, 1,459 business claims totaling \$3,165,904; and Jan. 15, six claims totaling \$235,918.

Rambo also awarded \$1,685,636 for 1,366 real estate loss claims on Jan. 15.

NRC tentatively approves step to circumvent foes of 2 reactors

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission yesterday tentatively approved easing emergency planning requirements for nuclear power plants, a step designed to circumvent state and local opposition to two multibillion-dollar reactors awaiting startup on the East Coast.

The decision, if ratified after a 60-day period for public comment, would clear the way for licensing the Shoreham plant on Long Island, N.Y., and the Seabrook plant in New Hampshire.

Those facilities, each costing more than \$4 billion, are strongly opposed by Govs. Mario Cuomo of New York and Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, who

were among a score of elected officials who appeared before the commission Tuesday to protest the proposed rules change.

So far, Cuomo and Dukakis have managed to block the startup of Shoreham and Seabrook because NRC rules adopted in the wake of the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island near Harrisburg, Pa., require state and local cooperation in planning for the evacuation of residents within 10 miles of a reactor in the event of a major accident.

The two governors have refused, saying there is no way to guarantee the safe exodus of residents in the cases of Shoreham and Seabrook.

The proposed rules change would entitle the NRC to go ahead and license a plant in the absence of state and local cooperation on emergency plans. In such cases, the utilities would be required to develop evacuation plans which could be reasonably expected to work if local authorities did in fact respond to an emergency, regardless of their prelicense objections.

Dukakis described yesterday's 4-1 vote as "ill-advised, wrong-headed and a total disregard for the responsibility governors and states have to protect the public health and safety of their citizens."

"There's been a meltdown in the NRC's star chamber," Dukakis said.

Cuomo told the NRC Tuesday that the notion of ignoring state objections "suggests a policy that would be unconstitutional, a blatant disregarding of the need for evacuation, a repudiation of the president, a contradiction of the history of this commission ... and a further blow to your already diminished credibility."

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, May 13, 1987

NRC extends deadline for public opinion

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has extended the deadline for comment on its proposal to allow licensing of nuclear reactors without state and local approval of emergency evacuation plans.

The period for public comment originally was scheduled to end May 5, but has been extended to June 4.

Under the proposed NRC rule, utilities would be permitted to develop and, if necessary, implement their own emergency plans, even though those plans may offer less protection than could have been achieved with state cooperation.

More than 2,500 responses on the proposal have been received from the public. Rules proposed by the NRC rarely elicit more than a few dozen public comments.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, May 21, 1987

Commissioners want to keep nuclear emergency planners

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

County officials say they oppose plans for GPU Nuclear Corp. to use its employees to assist counties, schools and municipalities in developing emergency and evacuation plans to respond to incidents at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

The proposal has been criticized by the Dauphin County commissioners and the director of the county Emergency Management Agency, who fear GPU Nuclear's involvement with emergency planning could taint the credibility of the program.

The commissioners yesterday approved a resolution to support the current planning arrangement, in which GPU Nuclear pays a Camp Hill consulting firm — Emergency Management Services Inc. — to assist municipalities and schools in five risk counties with developing emergency plans. The risk counties are Dauphin, Cumberland, York, Lebanon and Lancaster.

County EMA Director Michael E. Wertz said he opposes termination of EMSI's contract, in part because he does not believe GPU Nuclear employees will be able to devote sufficient time to emergency planning on top of their other duties. He also questioned whether such an arrangement would be perceived as credible.

In a letter to Phillip R. Clark, president of GPU Nuclear Corp., Wertz wrote: "The public could perceive a pro-nuclear slant to planning and training which could widen the existing credibility gap and adversely affect public relations."

GPU Nuclear spokesman Gordon Tomb said termination of

EMSI's contract is under consideration, but no decision has been made. He would not comment on why such action is being considered, or when a decision will be made.

Tomb said the company is committed to public safety, and this proposal "should not be taken as a lessening of our commitment to emergency planning."

Commissioner Norman P. Hetrick said GPU Nuclear, which operates TMI, is under no obligation to provide this service, but "I feel it's a service they should continue."

The commissioners supported Wertz in his protest of the GPU Nuclear proposal, but they refused to back his request to terminate the county's off-site radiation monitoring of the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant.

Wertz said his agency is connected to GPU Nuclear's computer and receives information gathered from the company's off-site radiation monitoring stations.

The county began its monitoring as an assurance to the public. But, Wertz said, "If we are taking readings off GPU stations... I'm not sure where that assurance lies."

He suggested discontinuing the monitoring, which costs the county about \$3,000 a year. That suggestion was quickly dismissed by Hetrick, who said he believes the county's monitoring is important to county residents.

"It's a comfort factor for the citizens," Hetrick said. "I think it's \$3,000 well spent."

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Monday, May 4, 1987

Nuclear liability

If safe, industry should insure itself

THE PRICE-ANDERSON ACT, one of the basic underpinnings of nuclear power in the United States, is about to expire, setting the stage for what may become a major struggle in Congress this summer.

Price-Anderson requires that \$160 million of private insurance coverage be carried on each nuclear plant by its owners. Should damages from an accident exceed that amount the act requires that all nuclear utilities be assessed \$5 million per reactor to help pay the compensation. With about 106 nuclear plants in operation, this has the effect of limiting the nuclear industry's liability for any one accident to approximately \$690 million.

Whatever the outcome of the legislative battle, the liability limit almost certainly will be increased significantly, at least to \$2.5 billion and possibly removed entirely. Under a bill offered by Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., and others, utilities would be required to pay post-accident premiums of \$10 million a plant every year until all damages were paid. The effect would be to make utilities fully liable for damages caused by an accident resulting from negligence.

Another bill backed by Rep. Morris Udall, D-Ariz., essentially would operate the same way but set a cap of \$7 billion on utility

liability. Beyond that Congress would be required to consider dipping into the Treasury to provide "full and prompt" compensation.

The extent to which the nuclear industry should be liable for a nuclear accident has been a perennial question since Price-Anderson became law 30 years ago. During those years the industry was permitted to operate with a liability exposure far below the potential damages from a major nuclear accident. The federal government, in effect, served as the insurer of last resort, though that role has never been tested.

HOWEVER, THE ACCIDENT at Three Mile Island, where the known damage was confined to the plant itself, which was underinsured, did not instill any confidence that the federal government can be counted on to respond in timely fashion to pay claims or do much else in the event of a mishap.

The Price-Anderson liability limits have distorted the economics of nuclear power to the detriment of other possible sources of electricity and distorted the corporate risk associated with the technology, possibly to the detriment of safety. If nuclear power is as safe as it backers say it is, then its time for the owners of nuclear plants to assume full liability for their performance.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, May 5, 1987

TMI-1 generates its highest output

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

Three Mile Island's Unit 1 reactor, unable to reach full power since last year, is producing the highest power output in the plant's history, a company spokeswoman said.

The reactor is generating 887 megawatts of electricity, enough for more than 500,000 homes, said Lisa Robinson of GPU Nuclear Corp. TMI's operator.

Two shutdowns at the Lower Swatara Twp. plant on Friday and Saturday — one planned and one unplanned — apparently enabled the plant to reach 100 percent power. It had not been able to do so since it was restarted in March after a five-month refueling.

According to the company, mineral deposits in the two

steam generators interfered with the production of steam that drives the plant's turbine-generator, limiting the plant to 84 percent of power capacity.

The deposits had limited power in the past, but the problem had been corrected after a shutdown appeared to redistribute the deposits.

GPU Nuclear hoped for the same results with its planned shutdown Friday. The plant achieved 90 percent capacity before an unplanned shutdown at 7:51 a.m. Saturday.

That shutdown occurred when an operator flipped the wrong switch, sending an incorrect signal to the reactor control system. The switching procedure is being reviewed, the company said.

Unit 1 was restarted Saturday afternoon and reached 100 percent of capacity Sunday.

"ISLAND UPDATES"

THREE MILE ISLAND ALERT
315 Peffer Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Harrisburg, PA
Permit No. 807

To: All our friends
From: Updates Editor

Due to lack of funding, we regret to inform you that Island Updates will no longer be published on a regular basis.

TMIA will publish future Updates as money allows. TMIA continues to operate a full-time office and work on the following issues: radiological monitoring; Unit 2 clean-up as well as Unit 1 (court case still pending); health concerns; emergency planning; and public information and education.

You can help by sending an immediate contribution earmarked for Island Updates.

NAME/ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

ZIP _____

Enclosed is a check for \$5.00 for 12 months of UPDATES.

Make check payable to: Three Mile Island Alert

315 Peffer Street, Harrisburg, Pa., 17102

TMI Alert observes anniversary

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

Eight years have passed since the accident at Three Mile Island Unit 2, and Eric Epstein acknowledges the anti-nuclear movement has grown somewhat dispirited.

"How many letters can you write? How many phone calls can you make?" asked Epstein, a member of TMI Alert, a watchdog organization that held a news conference in the Capitol Rotunda yesterday to mark the March 28 anniversary.

Nevertheless, TMIA cannot be dismissed, he said.

"We're still around battling and we'll be around as long as TMI is here," Epstein said.

In marking the anniversary, the focus was not on the crippled Unit 2 reactor but on Unit 1, which is in operation despite strenuous opposition from TMIA and other groups.

Robert Pollard, nuclear safety engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists, visited Harrisburg to publicize the group's petition to shut down Unit 1 and seven other reactors in the country designed by Babcock and Wilcox.

Over the last eight years, the NRC has noted the plants' safety problems and called for their correction, Pollard said. However, the

federal agency asserts the Babcock and Wilcox plants are safe enough to operate in the interim, he said.

He compared this attitude to the one that prevailed at NASA before the space shuttle Challenger exploded. NASA knew there were problems and yet continued to fly the shuttle, Pollard said.

The Patriot,

Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, March 21, 1987

TMI Alert to turn 10

TMI Alert will celebrate its 10th anniversary Thursday at the Lakeside Lutheran Church, Green and Division streets. A spaghetti dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a program with speakers at 8 p.m.

Sunday Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., March 29, 1987

Florida N-protesters act on TMI date

MIAMI — Anti-nuclear protesters marked the eighth anniversary of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident yesterday with a demonstration to warn that a similar problem could occur at the Turkey Point nuclear plant south of Miami.

About 30 people, including a nursery school teacher in mourning clothes, paraded in a circle outside the downtown office of Florida Power & Light Co., which owns the plant, urging further tests at the troubled plant.

Both Turkey Point units, 24 miles south of Miami, are shut down. Unit 3 is being refueled and Unit 4 is out of service to repair damage from a quarter-ton of radioactive boric acid that leaked onto the reactor cap.

Joette Lorion, director of the Center for Nuclear Responsibility in Miami, acknowledged that problems at Three Mile Island, near Middletown, Pa., have differed from those at Turkey Point thus far.



Three Mile Island Alert

Island Updates

News Watch on the
Harrisburg Area

VOL. 7 NO. 2

JUNE - SEPT 1987

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, Sept. 5, 1987

Hearings sought on TMI water-disposal plan

Two anti-nuclear groups have asked for more hearings on GPU Nuclear Corp.'s plan to evaporate 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water, and the state has expressed support for the groups' actions.

Three Mile Island Alert Inc. and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance have filed requests for hearings on the proposal before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, TMIA spokesman Eric Epstein said yesterday.

"The commonwealth is supporting SVA and TMIA in the request for a hearing," said Dan Mangan, Department of Environmental Resources press secretary. "As a state we have a continuing interest in seeing that the cleanup operation is run correctly and that TMI is operated safely."

The state has not filed a request for hearings, Mangan said. It has, however, asked the NRC to give it "interested state status,"

which would let the state participate in any hearings that might be held, Mangan said.

GPU, operator of TMI, last year asked for permission to evaporate through boiling the radioactive water at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant.

Most of the water was generated during the 1979 accident at Unit 2, and the rest resulted from leakage. Some of it has been used in the cleanup since the accident.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, June 13, 1987

TMI leak forcing shutdown

Cooling system problem grows

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

An expanding leak of radioactive water in the cooling system of Three Mile Island's Unit 1 prompted officials to begin shutting down the nuclear reactor last night for repairs.

The plant shutdown, expected to be completed by tonight, will last about one month, said Lisa Robinson, spokeswoman for GPU Nuclear Corp., TMI's operator. The shutdown is the plant's third since it was restarted in March after a five-month refueling outage.

Unit 1 was restarted in October 1985. The unit was shut down after the March 28, 1979, accident at Unit 2.

GPU Nuclear engineers do not know why water began leaking from the letdown coolers, which were new when Unit 1 was restarted.

The water leaked into an intermediate closed cooling system, which supplies coolant waters to various reactor-related equipment, including the letdown coolers. The water leaked from one system into another and not onto the floor of the reactor, Robinson said.

The two letdown coolers are part of a closed cooling system that draws water from the reactor vessel.

This water must be cooled — hence the name letdown — before minerals can be removed and the water returned to the reactor vessel. When the plant is operating at full power, the water comes into the letdown cooler at 555 degrees Fahrenheit and is cooled to 120 degrees.

Officials say only one letdown cooler is needed to operate the plant. When plant workers noticed a cooler had developed a leak, they took it out of service on May 13.

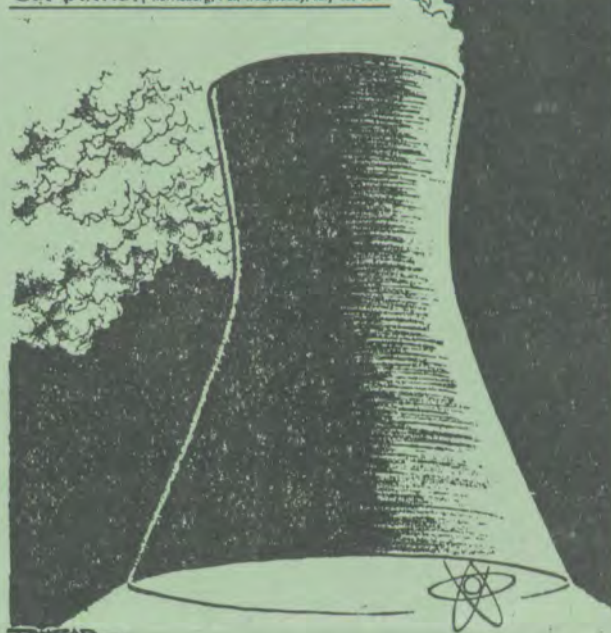
However, the replacement cooler showed even greater leakage than the first, prompting GPU Nuclear to take this second cooler out of service on June 3 and return the first cooler to service.

Robinson said the leak continued but was stable and considered small with water leaking at a rate of a half-gallon a minute.

Yesterday, the leak increased to about eight-tenths of a gallon a minute, and GPU Nuclear opted to take the letdown cooler out of service, she said.

The coolers are in the basement of the Unit 1 reactor building and were installed during the refueling because the old coolers also had developed a slight leak, Robinson said. GPU Nuclear engineers will study why the new coolers developed leaks.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, July 15, 1987



Ask not for whom the reactor tolls, it tolls for thee.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, June 16, 1987

Drug tests positive for 10 at TMI

By David Stellfox
Patriot-News

Nearly a third of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant employees tested for illegal drugs in the past three weeks tested positive, GPU Nuclear Corp. officials said yesterday.

Ten employees — including nine from GPU Nuclear and one from an unidentified contractor — tested positive. However, none was involved in plant operation.

Thirty-three employees were tested as part of an investigation into drug use at the Londonderry Twp. plant. The employees work at both the disabled Unit 2 and the operating Unit 1 facilities.

Eight of the 10 workers who tested positive were suspended for 30 days without pay. One resigned and another was dismissed for "refus[ing] to cooperate with the investiga-

tion" after testing positive.

Also, an employee of another unidentified contractor was dismissed after refusing to submit to the drug test.

Tests were administered to the employees "for cause" after TMI officials heard the employees might be using drugs off-site, officials said.

GPU spokeswoman Lisa Robinson refused to disclose the types of jobs the employees held. Robinson would only say they "were in positions related to plant operations, but were not involved in the actual operation of either plant."

GPU spokesman Doug Bedell said the urine samples of employees who tested positive were retested twice as part of the investigation. Bedell would not say which drugs were found, saying that information "wouldn't affect the administration of the drug policy."

The suspended employees will have to complete a drug rehabilitation program and retake a site access psychological evaluation before returning to work. They then will be subject to random drug testing, officials said.

Since March 1986, when GPU Nuclear's formal drug testing program began, a total of 70 employees have been given drug tests for cause; 16 have tested positive and two have resigned either before a test result was known or upon refusing to submit to a test, GPU officials said.

The company has informed "appropriate law enforcement agencies and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission" of the results of its investigation.

A move by the company to institute random drug testing of its unionized employees was struck down by an arbitrator last year.

Reactor shuts off at TMI

By Jim Lewis
Patriot-News

Three Mile Island's Unit 1 nuclear reactor shut down automatically yesterday, puzzling plant operators but causing no emergency, a plant spokesman said.

The reactor shut down at 5:04 p.m. as it was operating at 100 percent power, said Doug Bedell, a spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., which runs the plant.

Officials didn't know late yesterday when the reactor would be restarted, Bedell said. They were still investigating the cause last night, he said.

No emergency existed, Bedell said, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission was notified.

The shutdown occurred in a "non-nuclear" part of Unit 1 where steam is sent through turbines to generate electricity, Bedell said. Monitors didn't detect any increase in radioactivity from the shutdown, he said. The steam contains radioactive traces, he said.

The reactor apparently shut down when it received an electronic warning signal from a device called a "moisture separator," which removes water from steam in Unit 1, indicating its water level was higher than normal, Bedell said. The steam is used to turn turbines and generate electricity.

GPU Nuclear isn't certain whether water actually surpassed normal levels in the separator or the signal was false, he said.

Automatic shutdowns are "not common, but they're not that uncommon, either," Bedell said.

William Whittock, who can see the TMI cooling towers from his house in Goldsboro, said he heard a sudden roaring noise about the time the reactor shut down.

"It sounded like a great big jet plane was taking off in the front yard," he said. "We were scared. We rushed out onto the porch to see what it was."

GPU rapped for failing to document technical, safety reviews

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited GPU Nuclear Corp. with a violation for failing to properly document technical and safety reviews.

In a letter to the utility, William F. Kane, director of the division of reactor projects for the NRC's Region 1, says the commission is concerned "that a relatively consistent level of safety review performance has not been achieved."

The violation, listing five areas of criticism, was classified at a severity level of four, which is at the low end of five stages of violations.

The notice of violation said some proposed changes to structures, systems and safety-important procedures were not adequately reviewed according to NRC regulations.

GPU spokesman Doug Bedell said the notice was received yesterday but he had no immediate comment.

He said that "often these reports have overall comments. It's not just the violation."

The letter does note that there were "substantial positive observations" but they were addressed at an earlier time.

Kane wrote of what he said appeared to be "the root causes of the problem" of an inconsistent safety review performance level.

They were improper implementation of related administrative controls due to weak training; poor internal guidance on what procedures are described in safety reports and other documents; and a new technical and safety review system that introduced terminology inconsistent with other guidelines.

The violations were noted during inspections made from Aug. 25 to Oct. 3, 1986 and from June 8 to 16.

Activities included in the violation list were authorizations made last September to change certain

pieces of equipment, called valve positioners, throughout the plant without adequate identification of where they were used and located and without making sure the move would not cause an unreviewed safety question. The list noted that at least one of the valve positioners had a function that was important to safety in the emergency feed-water pump.

The letter also said several special temporary procedures and changes, issued between January and September 1986, involved important-to-safety systems but were not classified as such.

GPU has 30 days to tell the NRC what corrective measures it has taken and will take in the future and the date when full compliance will be achieved.

On-the-job sleeping alleged at TMI plant

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

GPU Nuclear Corp. said yesterday it is investigating anonymous tips that a shift supervisor at Three Mile Island Unit 2 has been sleeping on the job.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission also has sent a team of employees to the Londonderry Twp. plant to "conduct an inquiry," said William D. Travers, NRC director of the TMI-2 Cleanup Project.

Unit 2 has been shut down since the March 28, 1979, accident that nearly resulted in a meltdown of the plant's nuclear fuel.

The shift supervisor is an NRC-licensed employee, GPU spokesman Gordon Tomb said.

"A shift supervisor supervises the control room staff, among other duties," Tomb said. "The person's office is adjoining the control room."

Tomb said the suspected employee was removed from licensed operator responsibilities pending completion of the investigation and remains employed by GPU "in another capacity."

Employees sleeping on the job has plagued Philadelphia Electric Co.'s Peach Bottom plant in York County this year. The NRC in March shut down the plant's two reactors when workers were found sleeping at control panels.

A non-licensed plant employee was suspended in May when he was found sleeping in the radioactive-waste control room.

GPU's investigation was spurred by anonymous notes sent to GPU Nuclear management and the NRC, Tomb said.

The utility has "kept the NRC apprised of our investigation," Tomb said, but Travers said the agency was looking into the matter independently.

"We received copies of the letters and are conducting an inquiry into the events," Travers said. "An investigation implies something on a level that we are not yet at. We are gathering facts right now and many of them are being supplied by GPU."

Travers said "a team of individuals" from the NRC's regional office in King of Prussia is at the plant to conduct the inquiry.

GPU said the employee either "slept or was otherwise inattentive to his job." Tomb would not elaborate on what constituted inattentiveness.

He also declined to reveal when the allegations were made and when the investigation began.

In addition to the allegations against the shift supervisor, a GPU manager this week found "make-shift bedding" in isolated areas of the Unit 2 turbine building.

The building, he said, is used for defueling, mock-up training, maintenance shops and tool storage.

GPU has conducted regular unannounced management tours of TMI units 1 and 2 on a weekly basis since 1981. It was during one of those tours that the bedding was found.

In the last two years, Tomb said, three employees working for contractors at Unit 2 have been dismissed for sleeping on the job. None were involved in licensed duties or plant operations, Tomb said.

Further inspections of Unit 2 areas, including the reactor building and control room area, turned up no more makeshift bedding, Tomb said. Unit 1 also came up clean after similar sweeps, he said.

GPU Nuclear fined for violations in Jersey

United Press International

KING OF PRUSSIA — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission yesterday fined GPU Nuclear Corp. \$205,000 for violations at its Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station near Toms River, N.J.

NRC spokesman Karl Abraham said the violations included the disabling of safety systems vital to dealing with a severe accident. There was no harm to the workers or the public, but the NRC said proper safety procedures were not followed and there was the potential for an accident.

"The failure to properly implement the procedures for performing safety reviews and making temporary variations to the normal configuration of plant equipment was not isolated to this event but was indicative of programmatic weaknesses," William Russell NRC regional administrator, wrote in a letter to GPU.

According to the NRC, Oyster Creek work-

ers failed to follow normal operating procedures on April 24 when they flushed a containment and pressure suppression pool with fresh air in order to remove nitrogen gas that normally fills the building.

In the process, two of 14 containment-to-pressure suppression pool vacuum breakers were tied open for about three hours.

"This was done at a time when the reactor was in the process of being shut down but was still producing about 23 percent of full power and producing steam," Russell said. "If an accident occurred while these two breakers were open, containment pressure could have reached a level where the containment structure may have been compromised."

The procedure was carried out without an adequate safety review of the effects of the variation, the NRC said.

Sandy Polon, a spokesman for GPU at Oyster Creek said the utility would pay the fine.

"The company's internal investigation indi-

cated that while the event did not affect the operation of the plant, it did represent a significant reduction in safety margin," Polon said. "The condition existed for about three hours, and the company instituted a number of corrective procedures and safeguards before returning the plant to service."

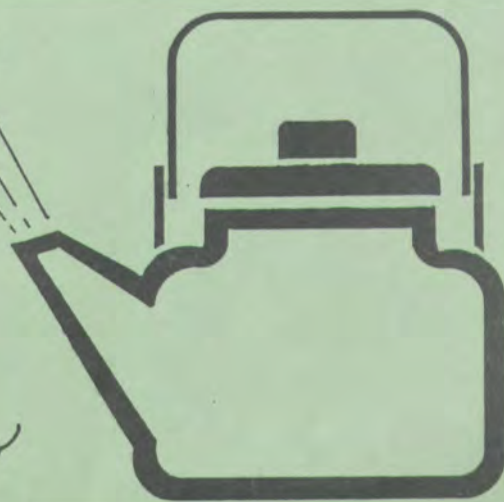
NRC inspectors also found that since 1977, one of the vacuum breakers was periodically tied open during some plant shutdowns, and would not have automatically closed during an accident.

Another valve would have closed during an accident but the NRC said it was concerned that GPU adopted the method without a safety review.

The fine included \$155,000 for alleged violations involving vacuum breakers, and \$50,000 for failing to properly implement procedures for performing safety reviews.

GPU Nuclear also operates the Three Mile Island nuclear plant near Harrisburg.

GPU WANTS TO CONTAMINATE OUR AIR BY EVAPORATING 2.3 MILLION GALLONS OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE WATER FROM THE TMI 2 ACCIDENT



The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, July 16, 1987

TMI evaporation plan

NRC staff takes stand on handling tainted water

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff yesterday recommended that the agency's commissioners approve a plan to evaporate water contaminated in the 1979 Three Mile Island accident.

The TMI Cleanup Project Directorate for the NRC, in a report issued yesterday, called the plan to evaporate 2.3 million gallons of tainted water "an acceptable disposal plan."

It advised the NRC commissioners to approve the proposal put forth by GPU Nuclear Corp., operators of the Londonderry Twp. plant.

The plan has sparked considerable local debate, particularly among groups opposed to nuclear energy. The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination of TMI Unit 2, appointed by the NRC to allow for citizen input, voted 5-to-4 against the evaporation plan in March.

In both a preliminary report issued in January and the final report, the NRC staff said the evaporation plan and eight alternatives proposed by GPU Nuclear would have a health and environmental impact that would be "very small."

Although the evaporation proposal could go directly to the commissioners for a vote, it is more likely that the commissioners will appoint administrative law judges to hold a hearing on the NRC report, said Dr. William D. Travers, the NRC's director of the TMI cleanup.

A hearing at this stage is optional and will only be conducted if the commissioners receive what they consider to be a legitimate request for a hearing, Travers said. However, the NRC anticipates such a request and Travers said he does not expect the commissioners to vote on the issue before the end of the year.

"This is being done in recognition of the public interest in this issue," he added.

Lisa Robinson, GPU Nuclear spokeswoman, said the company is "gratified" by the NRC staff's conclusion, but would not comment on how the approval process has held up the cleanup project.

The plant operators had requested an NRC decision by July 31 in order to allow for "timely completion" of the Unit 2 cleanup. GPU Nuclear President P.R. Clark told the NRC commissioners that the com-

pany expected to install an evaporation system by mid-June.

Most of the radioactive water was generated during the accident and the rest was added through leakage. The water has been treated, but it remains tainted.

During evaporation, a radioactive element, tritium, would be released but at levels far below the federal limits, according to the NRC.

Critics of the evaporation plan continue to question what effect it will have on the surrounding population, but the NRC report — called the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement — found there would be little effect on public health.

According to the report, the chances of one person developing a fatal cancer within a 50-mile radius of the plant because of the evaporation is four chances in 10,000.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, August 11, 1987

Public can comment on TMI plan

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

Public comments will be accepted tomorrow on an updated study of the environmental impact of GPU Nuclear Corp.'s plan to evaporate radioactive water at Three Mile Island Unit 2.

The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination of TMI 2 will meet to discuss the study, done by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the potential for a public hearing on GPU's evaporation plan. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the Holiday Inn Center City.

GPU, operator of TMI, has asked for permission to evaporate through boiling 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear power plant.

Most of the radioactive water was generated during the 1979 accident at Unit 2, and the rest resulted from leakage. Some of it has been used in the cleanup since the accident.

In its July report, the TMI Cleanup Project Directorate for the NRC said the evaporation plan and eight alternatives proposed by GPU would have a "very small" health and environmental impact. The staff recommended NRC commissioners approve the evaporation plan.

But the plan and recommendation have continued to concern some area residents and groups opposed to nuclear energy. In earlier

meetings, the advisory panel voted against the evaporation plan and delayed providing an immediate timetable to the NRC for removal of the water.

Panel Chairman Arthur Morris, who is also mayor of Lancaster, said the public may comment on the plan and question NRC officials about it during the meeting tomorrow.

Despite the recommendation for approval, tomorrow's meeting also will include explanations on how a public hearing process could be initiated. Such a process could draw out the issue for several more months.

Although the evaporation plan could go directly to the NRC for a vote, it is likely the commissioners will appoint administrative law judges to hold a hearing on the report.

TMI Alert Inc. and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance groups plan to ask for a hearing on the plan, said TMIA spokesman Eric Epstein.

"We need to develop a more comprehensive public record on this issue," Epstein said. "It's an opportunity to produce more expert testimony to buttress our testimony that evaporation is unsafe and will produce detrimental effects on the local environment."

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, August 13, 1987

TMI water evaporation delay seen

Lawyer tells panel of hearing process

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

GPU Nuclear Corp.'s plan to dispose of 2.1 million gallons of radioactive water could be delayed until next spring if opponents succeed in gaining hearings before U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission judges.

At a meeting last night of the Advisory Panel for the Decontamination of Three Mile Island Unit 2, an NRC lawyer outlined the hearing process, which he said could begin by October. Intervenor must request hearings by Sept. 3.

"It's hard to guess but with many intervenors and many issues, I can't see a hearing being held before February or March of 1988," said Steve Lewis, an attorney in the NRC's Office of General Counsel.

Most of the radioactive water was generated during the 1979 accident at Unit 2, and the rest re-

sulted from leakage. Some of it has been used in the cleanup since the accident.

In an updated supplement to an environmental impact study, the NRC staff said the evaporation plan and other alternatives proposed by GPU would have a very small health and environmental impact. The staff recommended NRC commissioners approve the evaporation plan.

But anti-nuclear groups and local residents have disputed the decisions in a series of meetings on the plan. TMI Alert Inc. and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance plan to submit a request today for a hearing before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, TMIA spokesman Eric Epstein said.

GPU must have its license amended by the NRC to evaporate the contaminated water.

If hearings are held, the board would then "decide either to authorize the change or not," Lewis said. "But on the issue of amending, a final decision will be made by the [NRC] commissioners."

"The commission's position is that decontamination be completed as expeditiously as possible," he said.

The advisory panel, appointed by the NRC to allow for citizen input, voted 5-4 in March against the evaporation plan. The vote is not binding.

"A delay in evaporating the water will not delay the overall cleanup," GPU spokesman Gordon Tomb said.

Candidate out to halt TMI trains

Gephardt asks impact study

United Press International

KIRKWOOD, Mo. — Presidential candidate Richard Gephardt and St. Louis Mayor Vincent Schoemehl have joined efforts to halt shipments of radioactive waste from the Three Mile Island nuclear plant through St. Louis.

Representatives of the two said the shipments should be suspended until an environmental impact study is completed.

Gephardt's and Schoemehl's statements were read Sunday at a rally at Kirkwood City Hall.

Gephardt, a Democratic member of the U.S. House from Missouri, and Schoemehl said the Energy Department had not studied the effect of the shipments on the environment.

"Without this, none of us, including the residents who live just yards from the tracks, can know whether shipments can be safe," Gephardt said. "I believe the shipments should not occur until the department files an environment-impact statement. Only then will we even be able to assess whether shipments can be safe."

About 70 people attended the rally sponsored by Citizens Against Radioactive Transport.

A similar rally sponsored by Citizens for Community Concern and Project HOPE attracted about 35 people in East St. Louis.

Both protests were part of events nationwide against shipments to a federal lab near Idaho Falls, Idaho, from the crippled No. 2 reactor at the Three Mile Island plant near Middletown, Pa.

Rep. Jack Buechner, R-Mo., in March asked the Energy Department to end the shipments. In its reply to Buechner's letter, the department refused to re-evaluate the shipments.

Eight rail shipments of waste from the reactor have passed through the area and officials say another 35 are expected in the next two or three years. One of the special trains hit a car several months ago at a crossing in St. Louis. The driver survived and metal casks carrying the wastes were undamaged.



Gephardt

Above-average levels of stress reported in residents near TMI

By Yvonne Simmeth
Patriot-News

A study of people who live near Three Mile Island suggests they have had above-normal stress levels since the 1979 accident at the nuclear plant, but the restart of Unit 1 may not have substantially affected them.

The study, by Sandra Prince-Embury and James F. Rooney, was formally presented Friday to the American Psychological Association in New York.

Rooney, an associate professor of sociology at Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg, and Prince-Embury, formerly of the Penn State campus and now a clinical psychologist at the Jersey Shore Medical Center, released the study through Three Mile Island Alert Inc., an anti-nuclear group.

The researchers wrote that while other, similar inquiries have been conducted, this study tried to "identify specific attitudes related to environmental circumstances which may contribute to ongoing elevated psychological symptoms."

The two did not receive any funding for their research.

Prince-Embury said the study developed a composite of a TMI-area resident most likely to be affected by high stress levels. Those at risk are people who worried about developing cancer, psychologically distanced themselves from the fact of restart, lost faith in experts and accepted restart only because they felt they could not change it, the study says.

The overall findings also suggest a pattern of stress that follows technological disasters, Prince-Embury said.

"Each event that occurs brings anticipatory stress," she said. "Stress levels are elevated before an event and, assuming there is no major disaster, then there is a de-

cline to the ongoing elevated stress levels."

That finding would explain the absence of an increase in stress levels after Unit 1 was restarted, she said.

"Local residents were given many indicators in the year prior to restart that the Three Mile Island plant would begin operating again," the study says. "Thus, for some, the anticipation of the long-debated event may have raised stress which then leveled off following restart."

"Other research has looked for the big, blatant stress effect and they didn't see any psychopaths or people hanging out their windows with ring, on their toes, so they say there's no affect," she said. "They're perhaps missing the important effects that are subtle, ongoing ones."

"The elevations should not be ignored," she said. "Other people in the field have found that ongoing elevated stress makes people more vulnerable to diseases and problems."

The researchers interviewed 214 Middletown residents in 1983 and reinterviewed 108 of the same people in 1985, a month after the October restart of Unit 1 at the Londonderry Twp. plant.

They looked at how people determine whether a particular encounter with the environment is a threat to their well-being. In the case of TMI, it included residents' concerns about cancer threats, potential accidents and radiation exposure.

They also studied what, if anything, people thought they could do to overcome or prevent harm. The researchers theorized that things such as faith in experts and GPU Nuclear Corp., the operating company, would alleviate possible stress symptoms raised by a perceived threat.

"Residents... who have faith

in experts to handle the complex technology represented by the operation of the nuclear plant experience less stress than those who have lost this faith," the study says.

"Residents who have lost faith in experts may feel as though no one is really in control of this complex and potentially hazardous technology or that those who could exert some control cannot be trusted to do so."

Prince-Embury said the findings show that it was not the lack of faith in GPU, but an overall lack of faith in experts that produced stress.

"It's not just the company," she said. "It has effects when it is extended to experts in general."

The researchers also found that two of the prevalent methods for coping with restart actually created stress, Prince-Embury said.

"We found two coping statements that were related to stress," she said. "They were: 'I just don't think about [restart],' and 'I accept it because I can't change it.'"

It was assumed that people who adopted these methods would not exhibit stress because they maintained they were not worrying about restart.

"But the more they tried not to think about it, the more symptoms they were exhibiting," Prince-Embury said. "It shows denial just doesn't work."



The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa.,
Wednesday, August 5, 1987.

TMI group seeks data on radiation

The Three Mile Island Public Health Fund is seeking unpublished radiation data from individuals who measured radioactivity before, during and after the 1979 accident at Unit 2.

Dr. Jan Beyea, principal investigator of the fund and senior staff scientist of the National Audubon Society, wants information from citizens who monitored radioactivity from February to May 1979 and were within a 25-mile radius of Harrisburg.

Beyea asked that anyone who wore a film badge or dosimeter during work or knows of any unpublished radiation data, send the information to Beyea at the National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

The TMI Public Health Fund was established as a result of a settlement of litigation surrounding the 1979 accident, and it is investigating possible health effects from the accident. The Audubon Society is housing the research program as a public service.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, June 25, 1987

Agency seeks less-frequent TMI reports

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission wants to discontinue its twice-monthly status reports on Three Mile Island Unit 1, designed primarily to keep the public informed of activity at the nuclear plant.

The most recent status report from NRC Region I stated the twice-monthly report would be terminated as of tomorrow. But Richard J. Conte, NRC senior resident for TMI-1, said the agency may compromise and publish the report once a month.

Conte said local media and watchdog groups have protested the NRC proposal because they like receiving a newsletter that quickly informs of what has happened at Unit 1 in the preceding two weeks. The report contains no opinion, only a summary of the plant status and operation.

Also, these groups reportedly like receiving information from a source that is independent of the plant operator, GPU Nuclear Corp.

"There still isn't that trust of the licensee at this plant," Conte said. "And there is still interest in how the regulator and inspector views the plant operation."

The NRC began issuing a status report for Unit 1 in October 1985, when the plant was restarted.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, August 27, 1987

Peach Bottom restart plan meets skepticism

Associated Press

BETHESDA, Md. — Federal officials yesterday expressed reservations about a proposal to restart the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant in York County, shut down after operators were found sleeping on the job.

A "Commitment to Excellence" plan offered by Philadelphia Electric Co., the plant's owner, drew questions and concern during a meeting here with the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The commission ordered the plant near Delta shut down on March 31, after reports that employees manning the control room were asleep on duty.

Utility officials have acknowledged inadequate management as the chief "root cause" of the poor performance, replaced top plant man-

agers and reassigned at least 12 of 36 reactor operators.

PECO submitted a detailed plan for improvements to the NRC on Aug. 7. The utility hopes to gain commission approval to restart at least one of Peach Bottom's nuclear reactors by late October.

But NRC staff members said in the meeting yesterday that the utility's plan for changes may need expansion.

William Kane of the commission's King of Prussia, Pa., office said the plan sometimes failed to address "fundamental" issues.

"You said things are getting better. How do you measure that?" Kane asked.

Utility officials said they intend to increase the number of licensed supervisors and operators on duty around the clock at the plant. In

addition, operators who have been retained are undergoing retraining.

Kane, reviewing a point-by-point breakdown of the detailed plan, asked of some items: "What are these intended to do?"

"To make it an excellent plant," responded Joseph Gallagher, a Philadelphia Electric senior vice president.

One issue that drew concern from the NRC staff was the utility's proposal to maintain the same work-shift schedules used before the shutdown. PECO officials said changing the routine would be unfair to workers and their families.

Many of the plant's problems occurred on the 11 p.m. to 7 p.m. shift.

Philadelphia Electric officials agreed to submit a final version of their improvement plan soon, addressing the NRC concerns.

NRC accused of covering up wrongdoing

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department expressed concern in 1985 that Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials were covering up evidence of deliberate wrongdoing by nuclear utilities, documents showed yesterday.

In a letter obtained by United Press International, a top Justice Department official cited statements by NRC commissioners that agency officials had withheld information "disclosing the likelihood of violations" by nuclear plant operators.

Furthermore, the department said, senior personnel in the NRC may have contributed to efforts to sweep possible violations under the rug.

The concerns were voiced by Stephen Trott, then assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's criminal division, in a March 18, 1985, letter to NRC Chairman Nunzio Palladino.

Trott has since been promoted to associate attorney general and Palladino has been replaced by Lando Zech.

The disclosure of Trott's letter comes at a time when numerous members of Congress have sharply criticized the NRC for being "too cozy" with the nuclear industry and too lax in enforcing its own safety regulations.

In his letter, Trott raised objections about an NRC restructuring plan that would have limited the independence of the NRC's Office of Investigations, set up in 1982 to investigate wrongdoing by nuclear plant operators.

The NRC restructuring plan would have required the Office of Investigations to report to the NRC's executive director of operations. Trott said that plan threatened the independence and effectiveness of the Office of Investigation by giving NRC staff officials too much control over the investigative agenda.

"Prior to and since the creation of the Office of Investigations, there has been some opposition as well as resistance within the NRC to the detection and disclosure of deliberate wrongdoing by [nuclear utilities]," Trott's letter said.

"In this regard, several NRC commissioners have already expressed concern that [NRC] personnel... have not disclosed information in their possession disclosing the likelihood of violations by [nuclear plant operators]."

The NRC never adopted the restructuring plan and Justice Department officials now say their concerns about the NRC have been largely assuaged.

"We feel matters have improved," said Justice Department spokesman John Russell.

NRC spokesman Frank Ingram would not comment on Trott's 1985 letter but said NRC commissioners were strongly committed to ensuring the independence of the Office of Investigations.

However, allegations have intensified in recent months that Victor Stello, the NRC's executive director of operations, and NRC commissioners have sought to squelch investigations and rein in the Office of Investigations.

Court to NRC: Safety first at plants, forget the cost

From staff and wire reports

WASHINGTON — A federal appeals court yesterday ordered the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to disregard cost when deciding whether existing nuclear power plants should be retrofitted to meet its minimum safety standard.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington overturned a 1985 NRC rule that was challenged by the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The regulation requires a cost-benefit analysis in determining whether and how existing nuclear power plants should be "backfitted" to meet the standard of adequate protection for health and safety.

The appeals court said it is illegal to apply cost factors to decisions about whether a plant meets the adequate-safety standard of the Atomic Energy Act.

"The overall focus and purposes of the act, as reflected in its history, support the conclusion that the commission may not consider economic costs in ensuring the adequate protection of public health and safety," Judge Abner Mikva wrote for the three-judge panel.

"We're delighted by a decision like that," said Eric Epstein, a spokesman for Three Mile Island Alert, an anti-nuclear group. "We've always maintained that health and safety issues should remain the priority in the production of nuclear power, not economics."

After the March 1979 accident at Three Mile Island's Unit 2, "many companies in the industry had to install retrofitting because of what was learned from the accident," Epstein said. "And many of them got around it by saying it was too much of an economic burden after their plants had already been on line."

He said he hopes the decision would set a precedent "for the courts to play a more active role in this type of issue in the future."

Representatives of GPU Nuclear, owner of TMI, and Philadelphia Electric Co., owner of the Peach Bottom plant in York County, would not comment on the case.

Diane Curran, an attorney representing the Union of Concerned Scientists, said: "The decision is a clear mandate to the NRC that safety comes first."

Lawmaker asks Reagan to remove NRC official

United Press International

WASHINGTON — A House subcommittee chairman asked President Reagan yesterday to remove Nuclear Regulatory Commission Commissioner Thomas Roberts from his office, citing evidence of "a pattern of malfeasance."

Rep. Sam Gejdenson, D-Conn., chairman of a House Interior and Insular Affairs subcommittee on general oversight, said congressional investigators had found at least three examples of questionable behavior by Roberts.

"Mr. Roberts Roberts has betrayed the trust you showed when you named him to the NRC," Gejdenson told Reagan in a letter.

"He has demonstrated a contempt for the process of government. Mr. Roberts' pattern of malfeasance indicates that he cannot be an effective member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

White House officials had no immediate comment on Gejdenson's request.

Gejdenson's letter is the latest attempt by congressional leaders to force Roberts out of office. A total of seven House and Senate committee or subcommittee chairmen have called on Roberts to resign, but he has refused, saying he

has done nothing to warrant stepping down.

To date, the controversy has focused mainly on Roberts' conduct regarding the leak of sensitive NRC documents from his office to Louisiana Power & Light Co., the operator of the Waterford nuclear plant near New Orleans.

The documents, which carried Roberts' initials, concerned cracks in the floor of the reactor containment building at Waterford and possible collusion between NRC and utility officials to cover up the potential safety problem.

NRC investigators have said the leak of the documents gave Louisiana Power & Light "a tremendous advantage" in warding off a subsequent NRC safety probe at the plant.

Roberts told Congress he questioned his staff about the leak, and was satisfied none were involved. He also said he destroyed all investigatory documents about the leak.

But weeks later, Roberts disclosed he had "found" the documents in a desk drawer he previously forgot to check.

Roberts claims his incorrect testimony was an honest mistake, but Joseph diGenova, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, is investigating Roberts for possible criminal violations.

Gejdenson said congressional investigators also had found evidence strongly suggesting Roberts had acted improperly in two other matters.



NRC lacks rules on shutdowns, GAO says

WASHINGTON — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission lacks guidelines on shutting down nuclear power plants for safety violations, and some have operated for years with significant problems, according to a federal report released today.

The report by the General Accounting Office recommends that the NRC "provide utilities clear signals on the types of safety and management problems that could result in a shutdown."

"Nuclear Regulation: Efforts To Ensure Nuclear Power Plant Safety Can Be Strengthened" was written in response to a request from Sen. Alfonse M. D'Amato, R-N.Y., who was to release the report at a news conference.

Victor Stello, the NRC's executive director for operations, responded to some of the report's criticisms in a telephone interview yesterday, although he said he had not yet seen the document.

Scientists' group accuses NRC of 'word engineering'

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's defense of Babcock & Wilcox nuclear reactors' safety is "a grossly superficial review," according to an anti-nuclear energy group.

The commission claims that operators of B&W plants, including GPU Nuclear Corp., which operates Three Mile Island, have

made significant improvements affecting plant safety, but the Union of Concerned Scientists called this claim "word engineering."

The anti-nuclear group petitioned the NRC in February to shut down all B&W reactors in the country until the commission could prove that these plants are safe. The scientists' group contends B&W reactors are flawed and prone to accidents.

The NRC responded that it

would review the UCS petition, but it refused to shut down the seven reactors.

In its response to the petition, the NRC said: "Almost 100 recommendations have been referred to the B&W plant owners, who have implemented or are implementing many of these recommendations."

The UCS said 95 recommendations were made, 89 of them voluntary.

One utility implemented about

25 percent of these recommendations while the other utilities implemented fewer, the group said. GPU Nuclear implemented seven of the 95 recommendations, according to the UCS.

"The NRC staff's response is a good example of its word engineering capabilities, but also indicates at best a grossly superficial review of the actual B&W owners' group recommendations. . . ." the UCS said in a statement.

TMI operator cited for 2 low-level infractions

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited GPU Nuclear Corp. for low-level violations in two separate incidents at Three Mile Island Unit 2 in May and June.

One incident involved a spill of 200 gallons of "mildly radioactive water" into Unit 2's reactor containment building, the company said in a monthly report.

"The spill occurred on the second floor, and the water then went through floor drains to the basement," GPU spokesman Gordon Tomb said.

The TMI operator has been cleaning the basement floor with remote-controlled robots to remove sediment left from the March 1979 accident.

The water spilled overnight May 24-25 from a disconnected hose when a pump on a water processing system was turned on, GPU said. The system was being calibrated and was not marked as being out of service as it should have been, it said.

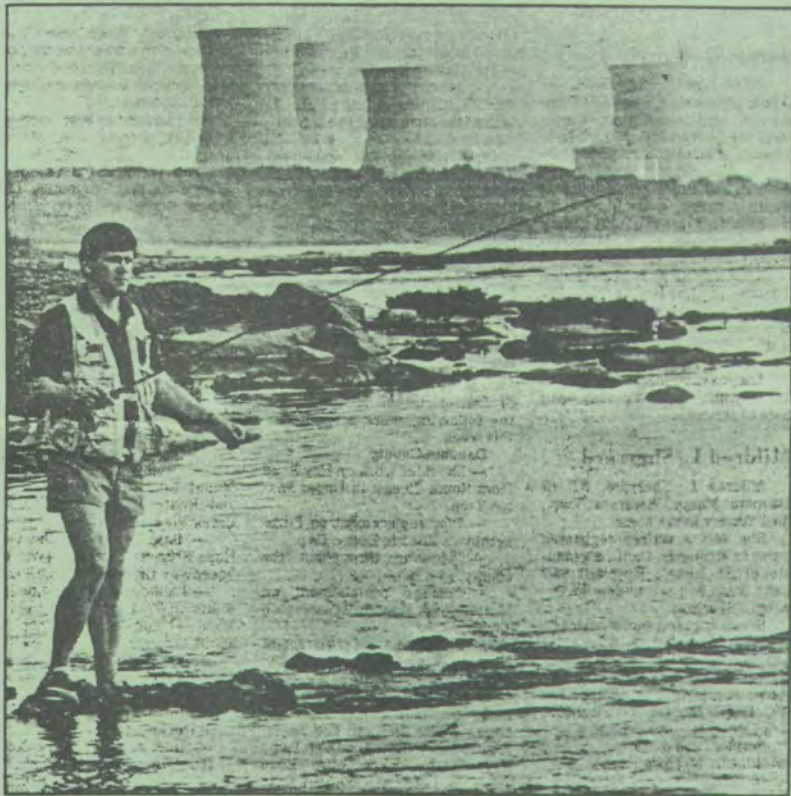
"This is the defueling water cleanup system. Its purpose is to filter and clean up the water from the reactor system," Tomb said. "It maintains water clarity in the reactor vessel."

Surfaces of the basement "are contaminated to a certain degree already and this didn't add significantly to any contamination," he said. No radiation was released to the environment, the company said.

Several thousand gallons of water is normally in the basement because of cleanup operations, Tomb said, and the extra 200 gallons posed no problem. The company said it is clarifying the process that instructs workers to identify systems that are out of service and should not be operated.

GPU's second violation at Unit 2 involved a June 7 incident where a radiological controls technician found a contaminated wooden pallet in a waste can for non-radiological material.

GPU Nuclear spokesman says fishin' is fine at the Island



GPU Nuclear spokesman Gordon Tomb fishes, with TMI cooling towers in background

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, July 8, 1987

Judge holds to dismissal of TMI suits

By Tom Dochat
Patriot-News

Dauphin County Senior Judge William W. Lipsitt will not reconsider his order dismissing complaints of some 35 people who were seeking damages as a result of the Three Mile Island accident.

Local attorney Lee C. Swartz, who is assisting the plaintiffs in the massive TMI litigation, said yesterday an appeal of Lipsitt's ruling will be filed with state Superior Court.

Some 2,000 people have filed suit in Dauphin County Court to recover damages from the March 28, 1979, TMI accident. They maintain they have suffered physical and mental ailments as a result of the radiation releases.

Officials representing TMI say not enough radiation was released to harm anyone.

Lipsitt decided Feb. 20 to dismiss some 35 complaints because they were not filed within the two-year statute of limitations. Attorneys for the plaintiffs, however, asked Lipsitt to reconsider his decision and also asked him to allow an amendment to the complaints to reflect alleged instances of company efforts to fraudulently conceal the extent of the accident.

But Lipsitt said in Monday's ruling that if "Metropolitan Edison Co. [part owner and former operator of the plant] was a culprit, it failed to conceal the severity of the accident from the very start."

The public was well aware of what had taken place at TMI, he added. The "very same documents and reports cited by plaintiffs to support the proposed amendments show that any supposed efforts to conceal the fact or the severity of the accident were unsuccessful, since those supposed efforts were themselves discussed in those public reports. Moreover, since those public reports were available within months of the accident, they cannot justify or explain a delay measured in years," the judge said.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, June 12, 1987

NRC ignores safety abuses at nuclear plants, inspectors say

From wire reports

WASHINGTON — A House panel heard new complaints yesterday from inspectors that evidence of safety problems at nuclear plants, including drug and alcohol abuse, has been suppressed or overlooked by agency superiors.

One regional inspector, James A. F. Kelly of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Dallas office, told of uncovering several alleged instances of employees being drunk or under the influence of drugs while on duty at the Cooper Nuclear Station in Nebraska.

Rather than take enforcement steps, Kelly said, the commission merely referred the cases to utility executives, who in turn handed them to the manager of their "Fitness For Duty" program. The same man was later arrested for possession of drugs and being under the influence of drugs, he said.

Kelly and other NRC officials appeared before the House Interior subcommittee on oversight and investigations in the latest of several congressional hearings this year to produce charges that the NRC has played cozy with industry and discouraged its own staff from tough enforcement efforts.

"There is reason to believe that the abuses we have uncovered only represent the tip of the iceberg," said Rep. Sam Kelly-Geiden, D-Conn., chairman of the subcommittee. "This is a scary proposition."

Kelly, a former assistant chief of police in Charlotte, N.C., said that in the case of the Cooper plant, near Nebraska City, Neb., "The NRC took no regulatory action of any type, even after these incidents were brought to its attention."

He said that over an unspecified two-month period, "I surfaced allegations of numerous security

violations" at the facility, including marijuana smoking by two security officials, a guard found unconscious from drug or alcohol abuse, a plant operator reporting to work drunk, and pot smoking by employees in the diesel generator room, which includes vital emergency equipment.

"We also discovered that prior to my becoming aware of the evidence of drug use, the utility had removed from its files incident reports of drug use and other security violations," he said.

He described another episode, in which a temporary employee set up a roadblock in a nearby community, "claiming that a radiological accident had occurred at the plant, thus requiring an evacuation. The employee appeared to be severely intoxicated and was apprehended by the county sheriff," Kelly said.

"I was not informed of this event at the utility," he said. "I had to find this out from the local sheriff. In fact, it was never reported to the NRC by the utility."

Even after he told his superiors, he said, "the NRC took no conclusive regulatory action. The NRC's rationale was that the alcohol-induced event occurred off site."

Loren L. Bush, program development chief of the NRC's Safeguards Branch, told the House panel that "the NRC has essentially left it to the nuclear industry to regulate itself" on the issue of drug and alcohol abuse. He noted, however, that while the industry has developed voluntary guidelines for handling offenders, it "has prescribed no standards for prevention."

"Thus, there is no law, no regulation, no national or industry standard, which requires nuclear power plants to protect against

drug and alcohol abuse," Bush said.

Eugene T. Pawlik, director of the NRC's field office in Chicago, testified that in July 1985 a control room operator at the Detroit Edison Co.'s Fermi 2 plant, then awaiting a full-power license from the NRC, pulled several control rods from the reactor out of proper sequence. "That... caused the reactor to experience a premature criticality," he said, meaning that a sustained chain reaction had been triggered without authorization.

Two weeks later, the commission approved a license for Fermi 2 after hearing a glowing report about control-room procedures, Pawlik said. When the utility physically received the license, it finally reported the premature criticality episode, he said.

Pawlik charged that Detroit Edison officials were "guilty of willfully committing a material false statement by both omission and commission."

Also yesterday, the General Accounting Office said the Reagan administration has failed to justify a planned \$3.2 billion facility in Tennessee for the interim storage of high-level nuclear wastes.

The congressional watchdog agency, in a report to House panels, echoed complaints long aired by Gov. Ned R. McWherter and the entire Tennessee congressional delegation about the so-called Monitored Retrievable Storage proposal.

The Energy Department wants to build the MRS facility for storing and packaging spent nuclear fuel rods from Eastern reactors before their journey to a permanent repository in the West.

Coalition urges accountability for nuclear industry

Associated Press

A coalition of environmental, labor and consumer groups yesterday said more accountability should be required of the nuclear industry for damage stemming from plant accidents.

In a letter sent to the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation, the coalition — which includes the Sierra Club, the Pennsylvania Energy Ratepayers Coalition and the Peach Bottom Alliance — called for modifications to the Price-Anderson Act, which is under review in Congress.

The Price-Anderson Act limits liability of the commercial nuclear industry to about \$700 million, the group said. The act was passed in 1957 to spur investment in the nuclear industry.

The act, which also limits liability at federal waste, research and weapons facilities, expires Aug. 1.

"This dangerous public policy must not be renewed in its current form," said Vera Stuchinski, chairperson of Three Mile Island Alert Inc., a Harrisburg-based citizens' group advocating safe ener-

gy.

"As long as there are nuclear risks, the public deserves a comprehensive federal policy that strives both to prevent accidents and to compensate victims if accidents do occur," Stuchinski said.

The coalition noted a nuclear accident could potentially cause tens of billions of dollars in health and property damage.

Members of the coalition urged support for legislation that would protect taxpayers from bearing the cost of nuclear accidents caused by negligence and also abolish arbitrary limits on nuclear industry liability.

The House Science Committee approved a bill last week that would cap the liability of the nuclear industry at about \$7 billion for any single accident. Senate versions of the bill are still in committee.

Other groups signing the coalition letter included the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Clean Energy Collective, the Pennsylvania's Farmers Union and Montgomery County AWARE.

Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, Sept. 11, 1987

How nuclear industry buys liability protection

IF A Chernobyl-style nuclear disaster occurs at one of America's nuclear power plants, victims and their families could suffer financially as well as physically, if Congress renews the existing limited-liability law.

The Price-Anderson Act, passed in 1957 and renewed in 1967 and 1977, limits a nuclear plant operator's liability to \$700 million for a single accident. This ridiculously low sum wouldn't begin to cover the deaths, personal injuries and property damage that would result from a nuclear meltdown, especially at a plant located in the densely populated areas of the country.

In fact, the General Accounting Office estimated last June that a catastrophic nuclear accident would cause \$15 billion damage under average weather conditions. Heavy weather that spread radiation over a wider area could increase the damage to as much as \$150 billion, the GAO figured.

Despite these appalling possibilities, Congress is considering a renewal of Price-Anderson that, although greatly increasing the cap on liability, still wouldn't come close to raising it to a realistic level. The House passed a renewal bill July 30 that raises the single-accident liability to \$7.4 billion. The Senate is expected to resume debate soon.

HOW DOES the nuclear power industry manage to maintain such clout on Capitol Hill? We'll give you a hint: The crucial factor may be cold, hard and green.

Nuclear power lobbyists outspent their opponents by roughly 6 to 1 during the six-month period from last November to April. According to Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, nuclear industry lobbyists spent \$356,797, while environmental and public-interest groups spent \$61,667. During the same period, the industry fielded eight times as many lobbyists as Price-Anderson opponents did.

Even more disturbing are the sizable sums that key members of



Congress receive for speaking to nuclear industry gatherings. These "honoraria" go directly into the politicians' pockets, and often require the honorable member to do little more than clear his throat at the podium.

Sen. Bennett Johnston, D-La., has been a recipient of the nuclear industry's largesse. As chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Johnston is expected to lead the fight to renew Price-Anderson in the Senate.

Our reporters Stewart Harris and Jennifer Smith reviewed the senator's financial disclosure file and found that in 1986 he was paid a total of \$11,000 for six appearances before nuclear-related groups. Among the companies that paid Johnston up to \$2,000 were General Electric, Westinghouse, Edison Electric and Pacific Gas and Electric.

Johnston's predecessor as committee chairman, Sen. James McClure, R-Idaho, was paid \$4,000 last year for speeches to nuclear industry groups.

Nuclear utilities and their contractors have also plowed millions of dollars into the campaign coffers of sympathetic members of Congress through corporate political action committees.

The U.S. Public Interest Research Group, a vociferous and determined opponent of Price-Anderson renewal, analyzed the industry's campaign donations.

Not surprisingly, both Johnston and McClure are members of the nuclear power industry's "\$100,000 club." Since 1981, the two pro-nuclear senators have each received more than \$100,000 in campaign contributions from industry PACs, according to the Public Interest Research Group.

Sunday Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., July 19, 1987

Meltdown, a nightclub, to go critical

Phil Scignoli is opening a new nightclub next weekend in Swatara Twp. He calls it the Meltdown.

It's hot, he says. It radiates energy.

Of course the word meltdown carries special baggage in this part of the country, where people remember a near-meltdown eight years ago at Three Mile Island nuclear power plant. That's eight

miles or so from Scignoli's club.

He says he chose the name "in honor of Three Mile Island."

"I think people sort of smile about it now. There's not much you can do about it. It's there," says Scignoli, who also owns Phil Scignoli's Nautilus Experience next door to the nightclub on Eisenhower Boulevard. "And we're here."

MELTDOWN



Phil Scignoli hams it up in front of his new club, the Meltdown

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, July 31, 1987

U.S. House OKs N-plant insurance overhaul

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House passed 396-17 yesterday a major overhaul of the no-fault insurance system for nuclear power plants, including a huge boost, from \$700 million to \$7 billion, in the maximum amount that reactor operators would have to pay victims of a catastrophic accident.

The overwhelming vote sent the plan, fashioned in the wake of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in the Soviet Union last year, to the Senate, where a similar version already has been approved by the Energy Committee.

Technically, the current nuclear accident law, known as the Price-Anderson Act, expires tomorrow, but commercial power plants already operating or under construction will continue to be covered under the much lower compensation limits of that 30-year-old statute, pending final action on the new bill.

Operations of some government-owned nuclear facilities could be disrupted, however, unless the Senate acts promptly. Government contractors currently are indemnified by the Energy Department under the expiring act for up to \$500 million in the event of a major accident, and some have threatened

to pull out without new guarantees from the government.

The House bill was crafted principally by Reps. Morris K. Udall, D-Ariz., chairman of the Interior Committee, and Philip Sharp, D-Ind., chairman of a House Energy subcommittee, and represents a hard-fought compromise between pro- and anti-nuclear forces.

Industry had resisted any increase in its liability limit over \$2 billion. Consumer and anti-nuclear groups, claiming that a severe nuclear accident could cost up to \$150 billion, wanted to force industry to bear all costs, no matter how high.

Sharp, noting the disappointment of liberal colleagues who lost amendments along that line, successfully implored most to support the bill in the end. "Make no mistake about it," he said. "This bill will substantially improve the protection to the public. At least \$7 billion will be available; otherwise it's \$700 million."

"ISLAND UPDATES"

THREE MILE ISLAND ALERT
315 Peffer Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Harrisburg, PA
Permit No. 807

A Note From The Editor...

Printing and mailing costs for "Island Updates" are currently being paid for by funding from the THE TMI LEGAL FUND. This funding has been offered for all issues of "Island Updates" through 1988.

Friends and readers are encouraged to continue to support our work. If you find "Island Updates" to be informative, useful, or just downright awe-inspiring, let us know with a note and a contribution.

Back issues of "Island Updates" are now available at a cost of only 50 cents per issue. Use the cut-out form below to order back issues, to send a contribution, or to put a friend on the mailing list.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, August 4, 1987



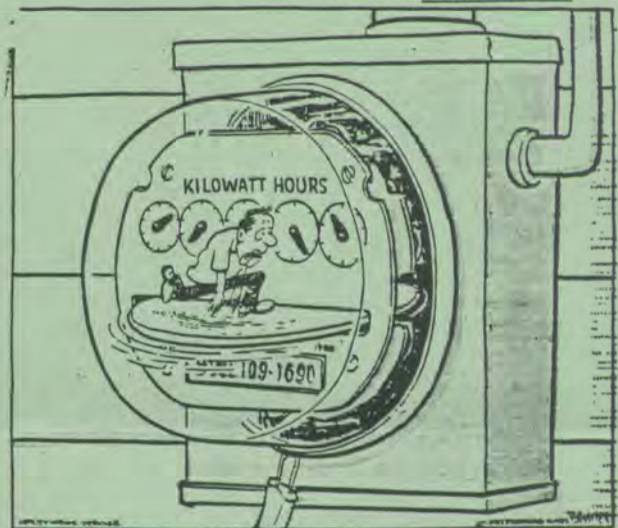
"Be glad this is America, Wimbish... If it happened here we'd just raise the consumers' rates!"

For Three Mile Island Alert,

Dan

Dan Welliver
Editor, "Island Updates"

Harrisburg, Pa. Friday, Sept. 11, 1987



I WILL HELP TO COVER THE COSTS OF PUBLISHING ISLAND UPDATES !

Name/Organization _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Amount of my contribution _____ (Suggestion: \$5.00 for 12 months)

Please send me the following back issues (at 50 cents per issue):

Make check payable to: Three Mile Island Alert
315 Peffer Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102



Three Mile Island Alert

Island Updates

News Watch on the
Harrisburg Area

VOL. 7 NO.3

OCT 1987 - FEB 1988

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, March 2, 1988

TMI fund

Out of touch with area needs

THE BIGGEST impact of the Three Mile Island Public Health Fund has been on the bank accounts of David, Daniel and Jonathan Berger of Philadelphia, who have run it like a family concern. With payments to the Bergers for fees and expenses thus far allowed by the court totaling \$2.7 million, those accounts are in good health.

The fund itself, however, is ailing, having been ill-conceived at birth, and wracked by internal bleeding and poor care during a tortuous existence that has been high on promises and low on results.

The fund was created ostensibly in response to the 1979 nuclear accident at TMI and in behalf of those affected by it. But despite the expenditure of quite sizable sums of money for various studies supposedly related to the accident and the plant, we venture to say that there has yet to be one finding — not one — that broke new ground or appreciably altered what already is known about the accident, its impact and implications for public health.

Rather, the Berger fund has been more notable for its internal spats, unmet deadlines and its virtual absence from the area that is supposed to be the beneficiary of its alleged store of wisdom. The Bergers' practice of releasing reports appears to be geared toward building a reputation for fostering scientific inquiry and generating new clients rather than keeping the people of Central Pennsylvania, in whose name this great work is being undertaken, abreast of the findings. Reports tend to be released unannounced in Philadelphia, though a special effort is made to insure that the readers of The New York Times are kept fully informed of the Bergers' efforts in behalf of humankind.

INFORMATION is only as good as it is accessible, and for most of Central Pennsylvania the public-health fund is a total

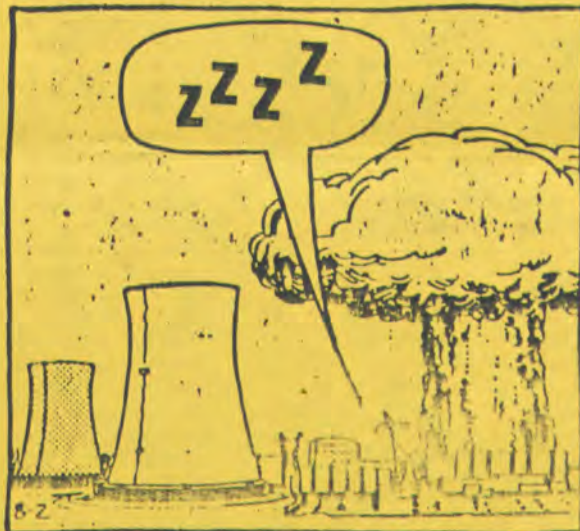
blank. A Citizens Advisory Committee that was supposed to provide a local perspective seems to have been largely ignored by the Bergers. It was quietly disbanded last year, so quietly that even committee members were unaware of it.

The fund is overseen by U.S. District Judge Sylvia H. Rambo. According to Jonathan Berger, the executive director of the fund, "When we get a letter from Judge Rambo, we jump around here. Nothing happens without her permission."

If that's the case, then we suggest it's time Rambo had the Bergers jumping out to Harrisburg and environs to explain what they have been doing for the last six or seven years to the ostensible beneficiaries of this \$5 million effort. There should be a series of well-publicized open meetings at which the Bergers explain the findings of the studies that have been completed and the objectives of those still in progress. They should answer questions and be prepared to accept advice and recommendations from the citizens that attend. They also should make available summations of the studies, written in everyday English, at the meetings.

WITHOUT THIS kind of "report to the people," the public-health fund will be devoid of any credibility worth mentioning. It already ranks not as a scientific and intellectual pursuit of merit and benefit, but rather as a legal and scientific porkbarrel in which the fees were good for work that, if not pedestrian, has yet to provide any proof of its own necessity or relevancy.

It probably is too late to rescue this debacle and reorient it in a way that reflects the priorities of the victims of the TMI accident rather than the Bergers, but the public has a right to at least be told what they're getting for the \$5 million that has been spent in its name.



December 1, 1987
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Costly napping TMI-2 supervisor fired for sleeping on duty

HARRISBURG (AP) — A shift supervisor at the dormant Three Mile Island Unit 2 power plant was fired last week after an investigation found the employee occasionally slept on duty for almost five years, officials said yesterday.

According to an independent investigation commissioned by TMI's operator, GPU Nuclear Corp., the supervisor was involved in "a longstanding pattern" of sleeping on the job and in general showed inattentiveness to responsibilities.

The investigation concluded that the supervisor, whose name was not released, sometimes was away from the reactor control room for extended periods, showed a periodic lack of knowledge of plant conditions and sometimes read aviation materials and personal business papers while on duty.

As a supervisor, the employee was responsible for overseeing staff, fire-protection systems and radiation monitors.

The dismissed supervisor worked rotating shifts, although the sleeping problems primarily occurred from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., Tomb said.

"This pattern continued despite confrontations between [the shift supervisor] and members of his crew over the issue of sleeping and despite several warnings, beginning in October 1986, by TMI-2 management," the report said.

The report confirmed that the employee, who was fired Nov. 27, had been sleeping on the job since 1983 and perhaps earlier.

Gordon Tomb, a plant spokesman, said investigators were continuing to review management response to the sleeping allegations.

The independent investigation was set off in July after anonymous notes were sent to GPU management and to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The shift supervisor was removed from licensed operator responsibilities at the time.

Tomb said the company was unsure why the allegations had surfaced anonymously rather than through regular channels. He said the question would be reviewed as the probe continued.

The investigation, which involved interviews with some 70 employees at the plant, was conducted by Edwin H. Stier, a former director of the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice.

Kay Pickering, a spokeswoman for TMI Alert, said the sleeping problem underscores the group's longstanding criticism of plant management.

"The management concerns that we have have not gone away," Pickering said. "There's a serious problem."

TMI N-waste shipments halted temporarily

From staff and wire reports

WASHINGTON — Nuclear-waste shipments from the damaged Unit 2 reactor at Three Mile Island will be temporarily halted until the U.S. Department of Energy completes a probe into a rail switching incident near St. Louis.

Sen. John Danforth, R-Mo., said DOE has agreed to stop the shipments from Pennsylvania to a laboratory in Idaho Falls, Idaho, until the investigation is completed. He said he didn't know how long the probe would take.

Gordon Tomb, a spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., the plant's operator, today said officials would have no comment on the effect of the suspension until the issue is clarified through DOE.

GPU has been shipping waste cleaned from Unit 2 to the Idaho facility since July 1986. Tomb said about 176,800 pounds of waste have been shipped, which amounts to about 60 percent of what officials expect to send.

Danforth, ranking minority member of the Senate's Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, last week requested the investigation into whether there were violations of rail regulations Feb. 9 when a mislabeled car was added to a Conrail train carrying casks of radioactive wastes.

The covered hopper car carried a placard stating it contained a flammable material, Federal Railroad Administration spokesman Bill Loftus said last week. It was later discovered the car was not carrying the dangerous cargo.

Loftus said the investigation is looking at possible violations by the rail switching yard and the Union Pacific Railroad, which operated the train after it left the yard, and a lime company that was shipping the car.

Danforth said DOE had agreed to allow the U.S. Department of Transportation to make a complete study of the routes used to transport the TMI material. The Energy Department has done

such studies in the past but has always concluded that the route from Pennsylvania to Idaho was the best.

A request by Danforth not to move rail shipments in the St. Louis area between the hours of 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. — commuter rush hours — also was agreed to by DOE.

Danforth's office said other agreements by DOE include:

- A promise not to add cars to TMI trains along the route. The trains, which leave Pennsylvania under Conrail power, will continue to switch to Union Pacific when necessary but no cars will be added. As a way to minimize the number of shipments, all future shipments will be consolidated into three casks.

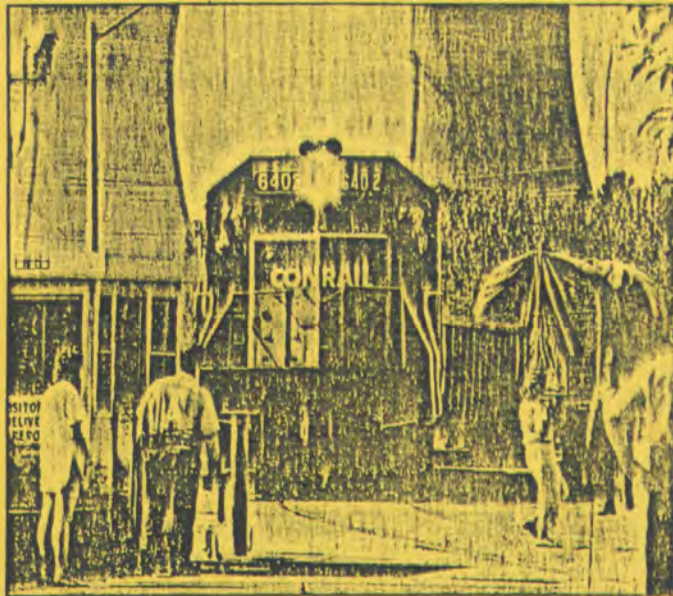
- Union Pacific will assign a certified hazardous-materials inspector at the East St. Louis, Ill., yard to assist with mechanical inspections and managers will be assigned at crew change points, inspection points and en route to monitor speed and times of day schedules through St. Louis.

- The DOE will post a health physicist on each TMI train.

- An FRA official will accompany each TMI train to monitor speed, schedules and track and equipment. The Energy Department also will provide additional emergency response training to St. Louis and state officials.

Meanwhile, Rep. Jack Buechner, R-Mo., has introduced legislation that would require casks used by DOE to ship radioactive waste to meet safety standards set by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Buechner's legislation, introduced Monday, would remove an exemption that allows the DOE to make nuclear-waste shipments without NRC safety inspections.



Shipments of waste from TMI halted temporarily

The Patriot-News

Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Dec. 17, 1987

S. Carolina bars waste from TMI

Associated Press

South Carolina officials have barred the shipment of certain low-level radioactive waste from the Three Mile Island cleanup to the Barnwell disposal facility, officials said yesterday.

According to a Nuclear Regulatory Commission memo, a 12,000-pound liner containing solidified sludge from the Unit 2 auxiliary building was found unsuitable for burial at the Barnwell site.

TMI routinely ships various waste to Barnwell for disposal.

South Carolina officials who inspected the shipment found the sludge, which had been mixed with a binder, had not properly hardened. Instead, the material had a soft, putty-like texture, the NRC said.

South Carolina has prohibited further shipment of the sludge until the problem is resolved, the NRC said. Four other such liners containing sludge from both the auxiliary building and the reactor building basement are awaiting shipment to Barnwell, officials said.

"We're holding all four until the problem is resolved," said Gordon Tomb, a spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., which operates TMI.

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Jan. 21, 1988

TMI operator hit with violation from NRC

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has sent the operator of Three Mile Island Unit 1 a notice of violation for failure to follow their own procedures when testing a piece of safety equipment.

However, the NRC notice said the agency is "satisfied" with the corrective action taken by the operator, GPU Nuclear Corp. The severity level of the violation was a five, the least serious, according to NRC classification.

According to the NRC notice, a routine safety inspection of the Unit 1 facility found that electrical wires for a piece of safety-related equipment had been lifted and reconnected improperly.

Metro West, November 17, 1987

TMI Alert to hear talk by attorney

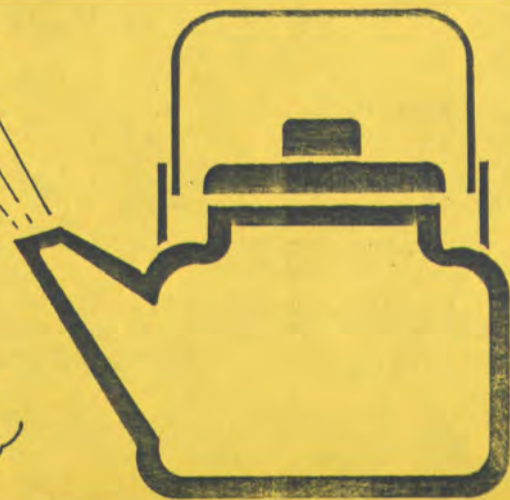
Three Mile Island Alert will hold its annual membership meeting at 7:15 p.m. today at the Friends Meeting House, Sixth and Herr streets.

Lauren Taylor, a TMIA member, will speak about her recent trip to France, where she spoke about the accident at TMI.

Attorney Joanne Doroshow will share highlights of her recent trip to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, to attend conferences held on the anniversaries of the respective bombings of those cities. She co-chaired the Asian-Pacific Radiation Victims Conference.

Frances Skolnick, Susquehanna Valley Alliance coordinator, will discuss the upcoming Atomic Safety & Licensing Board hearing on General Public Utilities proposal to evaporate 2.3 million gallons of accident-generated radioactive water.

GPU WANTS TO CONTAMINATE OUR AIR BY EVAPORATING 2.3 MILLION GALLONS OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE WATER FROM THE TMI 2 ACCIDENT



The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, Jan. 13, 1988

GPU Nuclear must defend disposal plan, panel rules

By David DeKok
Patriot-News

A three-judge administrative law panel has ordered GPU Nuclear Corp. to defend its proposal for evaporating radioactive water from the crippled Unit 2 reactor at its Three Mile Island nuclear plant.

The order, handed down Jan. 5 in Bethesda, Md., sets the stage for an administrative hearing on the evaporation proposal unless GPU can obtain a summary judgment in its favor. GPU was given until Feb. 8 to request a summary judgment.

Judges Sheldon J. Wolfe, Oscar H. Paris and Glenn O. Bright also approved a request from two midstate anti-nuclear groups, Three Mile Island Alert and Susquehanna Valley Alliance, to oppose GPU at the hearing.

Four of eight "contentions" filed by the groups against the evaporation proposal were accepted in full for argument at the hearing. Three others were accepted in part, and one was rejected.

At issue is what should be done with 2.3 million gallons of radioactive water generated by the near-meltdown at TMI almost nine years ago. GPU's proposal to evaporate the water would release all of its radioactivity into the air for dispersal by the winds.

The two anti-nuclear groups would like to see the water left in tanks inside the containment building, or solidified, sealed in containers and shipped to a low-level nuclear disposal site.

In their first contention against the evaporation plan, the two groups argue that GPU Nuclear did not show that its plan complied with federal regulations requiring release of the least amount of radioactivity possible.

GPU argued that the National

Environmental Policy Act does not require the utility to use the water disposal method releasing the least radioactivity. However, the judges admitted the contention as an issue in controversy.

"The basis [for the contention] is set forth with reasonable specificity and sufficiently places the other parties on notice as to that which they will have to defend against or oppose," they wrote.

"We do not reach the merits of the contention at this stage of the proceeding."

The second contention alleged that GPU and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff failed to conduct a conclusive risk/benefit study of the "no-action" alternative, i.e., leaving the water stored inside the Unit 2 containment building.

It also alleges that the NRC's preliminary environmental impact statement does not demonstrate clearly "that the adverse impacts of disposal by evaporation are outweighed by the benefits of such disposal."

Although GPU argued that it had addressed the no-action alternative, the judges admitted the section of the second contention about the risk/benefit study.

Contention No. 3 alleges that GPU has failed to demonstrate that the benefits of evaporation will exceed the costs and risks to the public from the release of radiation into "the food chain, water, humans, and the entire ecosystem."

In addition, this contention notes that 88,000 cubic feet of solidified, radioactive waste will remain after the 2.3 million gallons of water is evaporated, and that it will have to be trucked to a low-level waste disposal site.

The NRC staff argued against this contention, stating that "mere listing of two asserted

risks" is not enough basis for the contention to be admitted. The judges disagreed.

In the fourth contention, TMI Alert and the Susquehanna Valley Alliance argue that there is "no credible evidence" that the evaporator will not break down more than 25 percent of the time, giving no assurance that all the radioactive water can be evaporated in a period of time short enough to protect the public.

It also alleged that insufficient evidence was provided by GPU that the evaporator can filter out dangerous substances, that the safety of the evaporator in an open cycle mode has not been proven, and that no proof has been provided that the evaporator can increase its processing rate from three to 20 gallons per minute without jeopardizing the public.

The judges denied the first allegation and admitted the last three.

Only one of four parts of contention No. 5 was admitted by the judges. Part one, which was dismissed, consisted of a statement by Dr. Karl L. Morgan that studies by GPU have been "woefully inadequate" and more study is needed before deciding how to get rid of the water.

Part two, which was also rejected, alleged that cumulative effects of radiation already released from TMI were ignored in the preliminary environmental impact study. Part three, which was also rejected, alleged that the "synergistic effect" of all radioisotopes and chemicals in the water needed study.

The final part, which was accepted, alleged that the effects of tritium, a radioactive substance, in the water had been underestimated by GPU, and that the effects of alpha emitters and other transuranics "have been virtually ignored."

Contention No. 6 alleged that "many impurities" were added to the radioactive water in the nine years since the accident, and their effect on the cleanup system and evaporator "must be evaluated."

Both the NRC staff and the judges agreed that this contention should be admitted as an issue in controversy.

Contention No. 7 was the only one completely rejected by the three-judge panel. The anti-nuclear groups contended it would be "prudent" to complete off-site monitoring studies before the evaporation.

In the eighth contention, the TMI Alert and Susquehanna Valley Alliance alleged that GPU's preliminary environmental impact statement failed to "give reasonable consideration" to two alternative methods of disposing of the water.

One was closed cycle evaporation with solidification and shipment to a low-level waste site of the bottoms and condensate, and the other was storage of the water in tanks within the containment building.

The judges accepted this contention.

GPU agrees to pay for alleged bias

By Yvonne Simmeth

Patriot-News - Dec. 14, 1987

The operator of Three Mile Island will pay a \$40,000 fine to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in a settlement agreement involving alleged discrimination against an engineer who raised safety questions in 1983.

The fine against GPU Nuclear Corp. is \$24,000 less than one originally imposed last year by the NRC in the case of former employee Richard D. Parks.

Parks was a senior engineer at Unit 2 during cleanup operations and worked for GPU's main cleanup contractor, Bechtel North American Power Corp.

He alleged safety procedures were not being followed with cleanup equipment for the reactor, which was crippled in the March 1979

accident. He also said he was harassed and intimidated after raising those concerns.

Parks subsequently was removed from his job at the Londonderry Twp. plant.

The settlement, approved by NRC Administrative Law Judge Ivan Smith on Thursday and announced yesterday, closes the case but does not address the question of discrimination or the extent, if any, of management involvement in the alleged violations.

The NRC staff agreed to drop the severity level of the violation and GPU agreed to pay a lower fine, which corresponds to the lesser severity level.

"The agreement is not intended and shall not be construed as an admission of wrongdoing or fault by GPUN or Bechtel," the plant operator said in a prepared statement.

However, the NRC maintains the violation notice was appropriate but noted it did involve

an isolated incident.

"Our position is that we haven't backed down from our actions at all," said George E. Johnson, lead attorney for the NRC in the case. "The charges were appropriate as brought."

Johnson said the settlement also "has a provision that forecloses us from bringing any charges up again on the same facts."

The NRC initially fined GPU \$64,000 because the agency found Parks "was discriminated against for engaging in protected activities in reporting safety problems to his management," according to a text of their original decision.

GPU contested the findings and violation and was granted a hearing last year.

"Both sides maintain they are right in their positions," Johnson said. "But the compromise and settlement are in the interests of both sides and the public and the judge agreed."

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Jan. 14, 1988

NRC staff cuts may hurt TMI safety, group fears

Associated Press

A U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff cutback at Three Mile Island might jeopardize safety and health standards at the Unit 2 cleanup, an advocacy group said yesterday.

Vera Stuchinski, a spokeswoman for Three Mile Island Alert Inc., told a cleanup advisory panel the planned cutback of NRC staff is tantamount to "turning your back and walking away."

"The recent proposal ... to reduce staffing levels at Three Mile Island is ill-timed and perhaps illegal," Stuchinski told the Advisory Panel for the Decon-

tamination of Three Mile Island Unit 2.

"If this reduction becomes a reality, the NRC will find itself in the position of being understaffed, overwhelmed and isolated from the day-to-day activities of the cleanup," she said.

Last month, the NRC announced plans to reduce its eight-member staff at TMI-2 in February, to two engineers. The commission said the staffing change was being made in light of "greatly reduced" health and safety risks at the plant.

Since 1979, when a combination of factors led to partial fuel melting in the reactor's nuclear core, the NRC has played a role

in monitoring safety and overseeing the progress of an estimated \$1 billion cleanup, which is expected to end in mid-1989.

However, NRC officials told the advisory panel that fiscal belt-tightening at the federal level also played a role in the decision.

"I would be ignoring the practical reality if I said the budget wasn't a consideration," said Frank Miraglia, an NRC official.

"It's a consideration, but it didn't dictate," he said in a later interview.

Miraglia said there would be adequate NRC presence at TMI-2, and that additional resources

could be called in if needed.

"It's not as if we are going away," he said.

Panel Chairman Arthur Morris said he accepted the staff cut, although with some reservations.

"Given the financial situation the NRC is in, and given that they say they can handle the day-to-day operations, reluctantly I accept this staff reduction," he said.

GPU Nuclear Corp., TMI operator, pays certain fees to the NRC for its activities. Frank Standerfer, director of cleanup at TMI-2, said any funds saved because of the cutback would be funneled back into the cleanup.

Dauphin County Never Notified Middletown

Editor:

On October 22, 1987, a number of communities close to Three Mile Island were involved in a drill dealing with a possible nuclear accident at the Island. The drill was announced many weeks before it was to be held, but no one knew exactly when the drill would take place.

Drills on the Island are held quite often, but drills involving the local communities are held every two years. They are held to see how the local counties and communities will react should a nuclear accident take place at Three Mile Island.

All information pertaining to a drill or an actual nuclear accident must first start at the state level, but all information given to the local communities comes directly from the county EOC (Emergency Operations Center). In the case of the Borough of Middletown, all information

comes from the Dauphin County EOC.

I must say I'm disappointed in the way Dauphin County handled the drill on October 22, 1987. Dauphin County never notified Middletown Borough that the drill had started. Approximately 45 minutes into the drill, we still hadn't been notified by the County EOC that the drill had started.

The County EOC knew that the Borough was participating in the drill along with other communities that are close to Three Mile Island. It was only after the Borough's Emergency Management coordinator called the County EOC to find out why the Borough had not been informed about the drill that we received official notification about the start of the drill.

The County EOC blamed the error on a computer. One would think, since this piece of equipment is vital in in-

forming communities about such important events, it would be tested almost daily to make sure that it is in excellent working condition.

Forty-five minutes is a long time. If an accident had really taken place, that 45 minutes could have caused the citizens of the Borough many problems. There are many things that have to be done in an emergency. Every minute is vital and delays can cost the lives of many citizens.

County EOCs have the responsibility to relay information to the local communities under their command. During the recent drill, Dauphin County failed to keep the Borough informed about events at the Island. The people of Middletown can thank their lucky stars that they have their own communications system. The Borough was kept informed by Three Mile Island through the Borough's communications

system of the progress of the drill.

No plan is perfect when it comes to dealing with emergencies, but since local communities must rely on a higher level of government for guidance, that higher level of government must do a better job than Dauphin County did on October 22, 1987.

I'm quite sure the Borough's response plan needs improvement, but we work on it constantly. The PEMA (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency) umpire told us that our plan had one fault: we had our security people too close to the EOC. All other aspects of the plan and our reactions during the drill were very good. We are not going to stop trying to do a better job, because improvement is always needed.

Robert G. Reid

The writer is the mayor of Middletown Borough

Discord spews from group's study on TMI

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

Around Christmas last year, Robert W. Colman received a letter thanking him for his service as an adviser to the Three Mile Island Public Health Fund.

The cordial tone struck Colman as ironic. The relationship between administrators of the fund and the dozen or so local citizen advisers had been difficult and frustrating, full of acrimony and, some allege, deception.

However, somewhat typical of communications from fund administrators, the letter failed to mention that the Citizens Advisory Committee had been disbanded. That information would be relayed later by an outside source.

The public health fund was established in 1981 as partial settlement of a class-action suit brought after the 1979 accident. The court ruled a \$5 million fund would study issues that arose from the accident, including health effects, radiation monitoring and emergency evacuation.

Three years later, the citizens panel was formed to dispel a complaint that the fund's Philadelphia-based administrators were indifferent to the trauma suffered by those living near the power plant. Victims of the accident had begun to feel like victims of the legal remedy, critics said.

After nearly four years, Colman and some colleagues on the citizens panel say they failed to increase public access to the fund and interpret its work to local residents. However, they do not feel the fault lies with the committee, which included professionals from many disciplines.



Fund is partial settlement of suit brought after accident at TMI

They are not alone in their dissatisfaction. Some researchers hired to do studies for the fund have walked away embittered, complaining of payments that were withheld for more than a year, communication breakdowns and unacceptable delays in the publication of their reports.

Meanwhile, the fund has increased from \$5 million to \$7 million and some fear the interest will end up lining the pockets of the fund's administrators.

The fund has sponsored some positive local projects, Colman said, including a radiation effects seminar at the Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg, where he is a professor of behavioral science.

But the bottom line, he said, is that something clearly went wrong with the fund.

"The whole experience is a lesson in learned helplessness," Colman said.

Under the court agreement establishing the public health fund, all reports commissioned by the fund are to be placed in the official court record.

However, a \$200,000 study completed in September 1986 has yet to be submitted.

Dr. Bernd Franke said his contract with the fund was clear. Once his report was submitted, the fund had 60 days to publish it or release it to Franke to publish. In the case of his report, submitted Sept. 24, 1986, neither happened.

Franke was also commissioned to study radiation monitoring, but from a different aspect than that pursued by the Patrick team.

First, Franke said he was told by Daniel Berger that the report was not final. He said he asked what needed to be done to complete it, but he received no answer.

Then, new stipulations were imposed. The fund needed an audit of Franke's firm, the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research. It took six months to hire an accountant. Another six months went by before the audit was complete.

"No problems were found," Franke said.

The final payment of \$22,500 was being withheld pending the completion of the audit, and Franke chose not to release the report himself because he needed the money.

"We're not a very big organization," he said. "That's a lot of money for us."

He considered suing, but discarded the idea because he did not have the resources to take on the Berger law firm.

The fund paid the final bill in December and Franke released his report in January. But the fund, which was under court order to produce Franke's report to the federal court by Oct. 9, 1987, has yet to do so.

Jonathan Berger said the fund's edited version, which was submitted to the court, includes information from Franke's report. And eventually the entire report will be released, he added.

"It is not being released because the fund is not pleased with some sections of the report," he said.

A motion demanding the Berbers file the report with the court was made by local legislators and two former Dauphin County commissioners.

U.S. District Judge Sylvia H. Rambo has not yet ruled on the motion.

★ ★ ★

Criticism of the public health fund frequently targets Rambo along with the administrators.

Rambo approved the class-action settlement that established the fund and, as overseer, she rules on all motions and disbursements of money.

Rambo refused to be interviewed for this article, citing a section of the judicial conduct code which prohibits public comment on an ongoing proceeding.

The silence she has maintained throughout the fund's existence has frustrated those who question the Berbers' ability to manage the fund.

Some say they feel nothing Rambo does is accomplished without extensive consultations with the Berbers.

Jonathan Berger rejects the idea.

"When we get a letter from Judge Rambo, we jump around here," he said. "Nothing happens without her permission."

Kay Pickering, a local anti-nuclear activist and a member of Three Mile Island Alert, has taken an interest in the operation of the fund.

She sent a letter to Rambo criticizing the fund. The judge's response, Pickering discovered, was taken from a statement written by the Berbers to Harrisburg City Council. Sections of the Rambo letter were direct quotes from the Berbers' statement.

"Over the years, what [the Berbers] want to do, the judge has said OK," Pickering said.

Local politicians, including county commissioners, city council members and state legislators, have petitioned the court for greater financial accountability of the fund, the ouster of the Berbers and for more local input on how the money is spent. All petitions, save the one that is pending, have been denied.

"It's a very strange process," committee member Glauser said of the fund's operation. "I don't understand how any of this could be approved by the judge."

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, March 9, 1988

TMI health fund hits radiation study

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

The Three Mile Island Public Health Fund is seeking to discredit a radiation-monitoring study for which it paid \$200,000 but now regards as inadequate.

Furthermore, the fund announced it would release only the portions of the report that it considers "scientifically sound," despite the fact that the U.S. Middle District Court of Pennsylvania has ordered the entire report to be placed on file with the court.

"If there are difficulties with it, the report is not fit to produce," said Jonathan Berger, executive secretary to the fund.

The \$5 million fund, which has grown to \$7 million with interest, was established in 1981 as partial settlement to litigation rising out of the 1979 TMI accident.

Dr. Bernd Franke, author of the radiation-monitoring report, dismissed the fund's statement as "bad business and unscientific."

But he is not bothered by the criticism because he does not believe the research fund has much standing in the scientific world.

"I think the TMI Health Fund's status in the professional community is far from being a role model," said Franke, executive director for the Institute for Energy and Research in Takoma, Md., and Heidelberg, West Germany.

Franke's report sought to develop an unusual method of radiation monitoring that could be implemented at the TMI plant.

He said the report was reviewed and the final version submitted in September 1986, but the fund refused to publish it or to give Franke his final payment.

U.S. District Judge Sylvia H. Rambo ordered the fund to produce the report by Oct. 9. When that deadline passed, an ad-hoc group of local elected officials filed a motion of contempt against the fund, demanding the report be produced. No ruling has been made on the motion.

Meanwhile, Franke received his final payment in December and released the report himself in January. However, the fund continues to refuse to place a copy on file at the court.

Franke said that trying to write a report to the fund's satisfaction was frustrating. Once he submitted progress reports which the fund complimented at first, but rejected as inadequate a year later, he said.

The fund said the study was inadequate, and Franke replied that he would need more money to obtain a more in-depth analysis.

"If you order a Yugo, how can you complain when you don't get a Rolls-Royce," he said. "You get what you pay for."

Berger said the fund has been dissatisfied with Franke's work throughout the time of the study, and that it took the opportunity of the report's release to disassociate itself with Franke.

He said the differences were based on a "scientific and technical basis."

However, Franke rejects this statement.

"Honestly, I don't think they know what they're doing,"

Costly N-plant monitoring need seen

By Denise Laffan
Patriot-News

A study released yesterday has concluded that radiation monitoring systems at nuclear power plants are inadequate and require improvements costing \$7 million to \$9 million per plant.

The Three Mile Island Public Health Fund report had stirred controversy before it had even hit the streets, and the scientists whose work formed the basis for the report were denying any connection with it.

According to a statement released by the fund, the study released yesterday, "A Radiation Monitoring System for Nuclear Power Plants," was based on a lengthier study conducted by Drs. Ruth Patrick and John M. Palms.

In their 1,000-page report released last year, Patrick and

Palms made numerous suggestions for improving radiation monitoring at TMI Unit 1 and all nuclear power plants. But when Jonathan Berger, executive secretary of the fund, provided an edited version of the Patrick report in draft form last fall, the two researchers criticized the Berger version, saying it adopted an anti-nuclear power tone that they had never intended.

Nevertheless, the fund continued to claim a connection with Patrick and Palms, saying the final report was "based on work" by the two researchers and "on consultation with others."

The recommendations in the final report appear to be similar to those made in the draft report, a copy of which was obtained by the Patriot-News last week.

In contrast to the Patrick report, which sought to describe a

generic radiation monitoring system that could be employed at any plant, the Berger report took a much more condemning view, concluding that all radiation monitoring at nuclear power plants in the United States was inadequate.

A press statement from the fund said the Berger report "strongly recommended" end-effect monitoring, which would include taking tissue samples from people living near a nuclear reactor, both while they are alive and in autopsies, to determine evidence of radioactivity.

End-effect monitoring also entails continuous surveillance of communities with regard to the incidence of childhood cancers and abnormal pregnancies.

The Berger-edited study also recommends improving environmental monitoring by sampling organisms as small as algae.

GPU Nuclear Corp., operator of TMI, has rejected these suggestions, saying they go beyond what is needed to conduct an adequate monitoring program.

According to GPU, the Patrick report "finds that existing monitoring systems are doing their intended jobs," but suggests technical enhancements.

On the other hand, the draft Berger report uses a "broad-brush treatment" and "lacked close familiarity with TMI's monitoring system," a company statement said.

Copies of the Berger report are available from the TMI Public Health Fund, 1622 Locust St., Philadelphia 19103 at a cost of \$15. There is no charge for non-profit institutions and residents living within a 25-mile radius of the TMI nuclear plant.

The Patriot-News

Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, Jan. 27, 1988

TMI faulted on accuracy of monitors

By Mark Fazlollah
Knight-Ridder

Monitoring equipment used at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant may be unable to accurately detect radioactivity and could hamper emergency relief efforts if there were another accident at the plant, a new study reports.

The 500-page report by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, affiliated with West Germany's Heidelberg University, is the second major study on the plant's radiation-monitoring system.

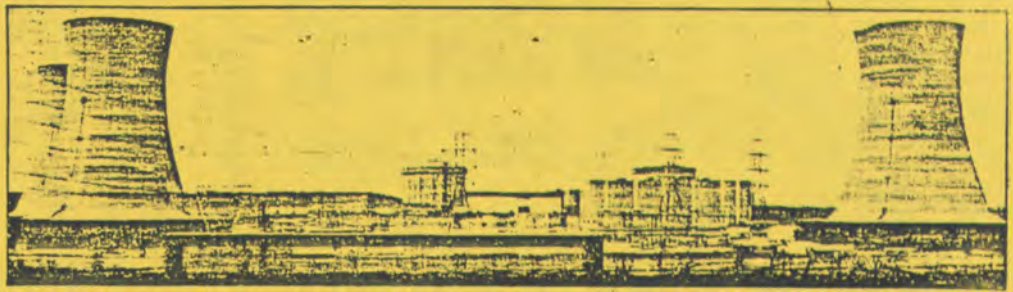
Both studies are critical of the system, despite improvements made since the nuclear accident March 28, 1979.

The two reports, which received a total of \$1 million in funding from the Three Mile Island Public Health Fund, used different techniques to analyze safety mechanisms at the site.

Both reports recommend that the plant's operator, GPU Nuclear Corp., increase the number and quality of monitoring devices around the plant.

The institute's study is to be released later this week. The earlier report was released Jan. 11 by the Public Health Fund, a research organization that received money from GPU as part of a legal settlement after the accident.

However, the Public Health Fund report was criticized by GPU officials and two scientists, Ruth Patrick and John M. Palms, whose work was cited in the study. Patrick and Palms claimed their findings were taken out of context and said they wanted to be disassociated with the report.



GPU officials have said the monitoring system is sufficient to guarantee safety of the public and it exceeds federal requirements.

Bernd Franke, director of the institute's Washington-area office, acknowledged that Three Mile Island has a better monitoring system than most U.S. nuclear reactors. But he said the plant's monitoring program still was "grossly inadequate."

"People at TMI were exposed to more radiation than other areas and therefore are entitled to better protection," said Franke, a biologist whose work has focused on environmental issues.

A radioactive cloud escaped from TMI's Unit 2 reactor in the 1979 accident, in which a partial meltdown occurred in the reactor's nuclear core. However, Franke said that few monitors were operating then and that it still was unclear how serious the escape was.

The Unit 2 reactor remains inoperable, but the company is using the Unit 1 reactor, which was undamaged in the accident.

Franke said his two-year study, which recommended scores of changes in monitoring and safety procedures at TMI, focused on what would happen in any future accident at the site and if the current system of monitors would detect an escaping radiation cloud.

Because the nuclear plant's detection devices are unevenly located around the reactor site, the ability to detect any radiation cloud emitted in an accident would depend on how closely the cloud passed a detector.

At a time when the air was still, for example, a radiation cloud might follow a narrow path away from the reactor without passing over one of the detectors, Franke said. Wind would disperse the cloud and make it more likely to be detected by monitors.

He said his report was based on a computer model that analyzed weather conditions at all times of the year. The report said adverse weather conditions could be expected at least one day each year.

It said during the worst weather conditions, the Three Mile Island monitoring system might detect only a tiny fraction of the radiation.

"In the worse scenario, radiation could be 160 times greater than the maximum measured dose that would be detected," he said. "That could be fatally wrong for officials making plans for evacuation."

Franke, in an interview, estimated that an ideal monitoring system could be established for \$10 million to \$20 million, but some important steps could be taken at little cost to GPU.

He said the monitoring system could be made far more effective simply by relocating the detector devices in a better pattern around the reactor.

Michael Roche, GPU's director of quality and radiological controls, said the possibility of significant errors in detecting radiation were "infinitesimally small."

Roche said GPU had implemented a series of changes in its monitoring system. He said the monitoring devices were placed at scientifically selected sites, where most of the people in the area lived or on land owned by the government or the utility company — ensuring that the devices would not be disturbed or vandalized.

MORE NUKE - NEWS

DUE TO LIMITED SPACE, MANY INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE ARTICLES THAT APPEAR IN HARRISBURG'S LOCAL NEWSPAPERS CANNOT BE REPRODUCED IN "ISLAND UPDATES." A FILE CONTAINING MANY SUCH ARTICLES IS KEPT AT THE OFFICE OF THREE MILE ISLAND ALERT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT "ISLAND UPDATES" EDITOR, DAN WELLIVER, AT THE OFFICE:

THREE MILE ISLAND ALERT
315 PEPPER STREET
HARRISBURG, PA 17102
(717) 233-7897

Artist's statement

Work called 'Meltdown' stirs a debate among its viewers

TMI crew to clean up lower region of core

Study conducted

on cancer deaths around N-plants

GPU Nuclear doubts accuracy of goat's milk iodine test

Medical center keeps TMI vigil
EPA transfers radiation-monitoring program

\$1.4 million shop speeds TMI purge

Waste handled more efficiently saves \$300,000

Limerick N-plant is haunted, staff rumor claims

Study of reactors such as TMI's criticized

Ghost story

Apparition reportedly walked through Limerick plant guard

No restart N.J. court forecast

at Unit 2

Despite changes in management

gets suit over TMI

Lawyer cites area's backlog

Three Mile Island cleanup is extended to May 1989

Seven-year TMI tax dispute ends; \$28M in refunds likely

PSU reactor would avoid TMI scare

Soviets to visit N-plant

Tour planned of TMI Unit 2

"ISLAND UPDATES"

THREE MILE ISLAND ALERT
315 Pepper Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102



A Note From The Editor...

Printing and mailing costs for "Island Updates" are currently being paid for by funding from the THE TMI LEGAL FUND. This funding has been offered for all issues of "Island Updates" through 1988.

Friends and readers are encouraged to continue to support our work. If you find "Island Updates" to be informative, useful, or just downright awe-inspiring, let us know with a note and a contribution.

Back issues of "Island Updates" are now available at a cost of only 50 cents per issue. Use the cut-out form below to order back issues, to send a contribution, or to put a friend on the mailing list.

For Three Mile Island Alert,

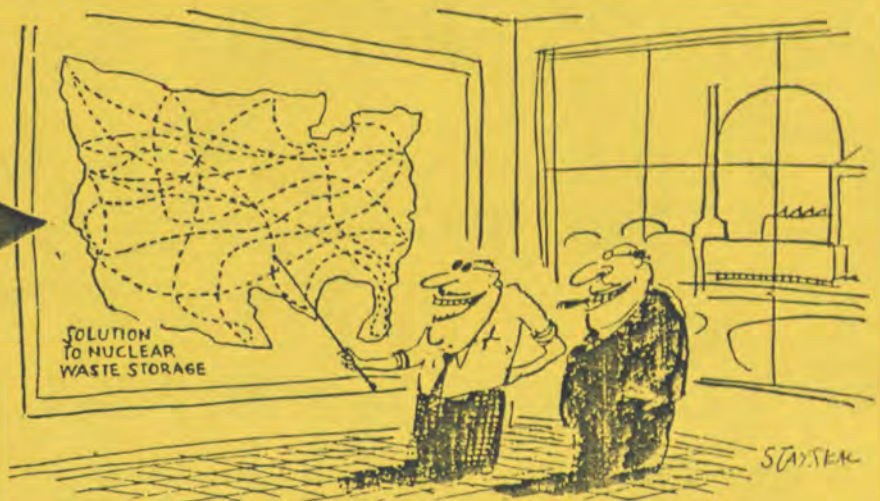
Dan

Dan Welliver
Editor, "Island Updates"

The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Jan. 21, 1988

Third cask to expedite TMI fuel shipments

To expedite fuel shipments from Three Mile Island Unit 2, the U.S. Department of Energy has added a third transport cask. The addition will reduce the total number of train trips between the plant and the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, where the material is placed in interim storage. More than 50 percent of the fuel and core materials from the damaged Unit 2 reactor has been transported to Idaho. The shipping program should be completed in early 1989.



...And from L.A. to New York to Seattle to Miami to Chicago to Oakland to Beloit to Boise to Memphis to back here, where we'll start all over again!"

I WILL HELP TO COVER THE COSTS OF PUBLISHING ISLAND UPDATES !

Name/Organization _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Amount of my contribution _____ (Suggestion: \$5.00 for 12 months)

Please send me the following back issues (at 50 cents per issue):

Make check payable to: Three Mile Island Alert
315 Pepper Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102