

October 19, 2005

The Honorable Samuel W. Bodman
Secretary of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

President Bush, in his memorandum of September 26, 2005, directed the heads of Executive Departments and Agencies to report to the Department of Energy on actions taken to conserve energy and fuel as a key component of the Administration's hurricane response plan. I am pleased to report that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) had taken and will continue to take extensive actions to conserve energy that will help mitigate one of the unintended consequences of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, rising fuel and energy costs, by investing in new products and enhancing some longstanding conservation measures.

The NRC has an ongoing energy conservation program which includes facilities management, carpooling, and public transportation. At the NRC's headquarters facilities in Rockville, Maryland, we have upgraded several of our energy conservation systems by installing sensors which automatically turn off lights and computer monitors. We also have installed energy efficient chillers, cooling towers, and lighting in the garage. Free cooling is achieved during the summer through the use of heat exchangers, which minimizes the use of the chillers. Our future plan is to reduce energy consumption by upgrading the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning energy management systems at our headquarters facilities.

The NRC also has a successful commuter program and actively promotes the use of car pools and public transportation by agency employees. An average of 800 headquarters employees participate monthly in the public transportation subsidy program, thereby eliminating fuel used for personal vehicle travel. To reduce single driver commutes to the Rockville work site, the agency promotes the use of public transportation, car pools, van pools, bicycling, and walking through transportation fairs and special events such as "Earth Day" celebrations. These events are well-publicized to employees through internal announcements and newsletters. In addition, NRC provides priority to carpoolers who seek parking permits and is implementing plans to provide them reserved parking spaces. For many years, bike racks, locker rooms, and showers have been provided for employees who commute by walking or biking.

The NRC actively participates in the Montgomery County Transportation Action Partnership, a non-profit organization of area developers, employees, and local government officials who work cooperatively to reduce transportation demands and increase the use of car pools and public transportation. In recognition of agency accomplishments in this area, NRC received two awards in 2005. The NRC received the Environmental Protection Agency's award for "Best Workplace for Commuters," and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation award for Transportation Benefits Coordinator of the Year, based on the number of NRC employees using public transportation, participating in car pools or van pools, telecommuting, and utilizing a compressed work schedule.

The Commission has also emphasized to staff and managers that, whenever possible, they should curtail non-essential travel as part of our overall travel cost reduction strategy. In addition, prior to approval for use of a vehicle during official travel, employees must ensure that public transportation is not a viable option and managers will review the necessity for car rental.

The Commission believes that these programs are critical to maintaining valuable energy resources. We assign a high priority to these conservation measures so that current and future generations can be provided with clean, efficient, affordable, and reliable energy.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz