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House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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January 22, 1982

Mr. Carlton C. Kammerer
Director, Office of Congressional Affairs
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Kammerer:

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter I have received from a constituent regarding Duke Power Company's plans to build a facility that will ultimately reduce low-level waste volumes.

I would appreciate any comments you can provide with regard to Mr. Plotnik's inquiry about NRC procedures so that I may best respond to his letter.

Your assistance in this request is appreciated.

With kindest regards, I am

Respectfully,


BUTLER DERRICK
Member of Congress

D/jm

Enclosure

8203100041 820222
PDR ADDCK 05000269
H PDR

Route 2 Bluebird Lane
Central, S.C. 29530
10 January 1982

The Honorable Butler Derrick
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Sir,

I write to you today because of my concern for the health of my family which may be in further danger from the nearby nuclear power facility owned by Duke Power Company.

The attached newspaper article states that Duke intends to reduce low-level wastes by processes involving evaporation and incineration among others. I question whether this can be done without increasing the already high levels of nuclear radiation released in daily operations well beyond safe levels.

I also question whether this facility can be built and operated without environmental impact studies and other normal licensing procedures including public hearings required by law.

I therefore request information on the environmental impact of this facility to include amount of off-site radiation anticipated by type, by frequency and also the expected increase in cancers and other radiation induced illness. I would also like to know what the E.P.A. has to say about this facility in terms of its potential effect on human health.

Lastly, I would appreciate a brief resume from the N.R.C. on what procedure they are required to follow (by law) in granting Duke Power Company a license to build and operate such a facility.

I include as a second attachment an article from The Greenville News which may be of interest to you. If you could provide me with the address of the American Association for the Advancement of Science I would write for a copy of Bernd Franke's speech.

I continue to support you with my vote in appreciation for your stand on environmental issues and I shall not soon forget your statesmanship on the Trotters Shoals Dam issue.

Respectfully,

Donald T. Plotnik
Donald T. Plotnik

Attachments

1. Article, "DUKE PLANS FACILITY FOR LOW-LEVEL WASTE", from the Greenville News, 10 November 1981
2. Article, "RADIATION LIMITS QUESTIONED", from the Greenville News, 5 January 1982.

1515 Mass Ave, NW
DC. 20005

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Duke plans facility for low-level waste

The Greenville News
10 November
1981

SENECA — Duke Power Co. plans to build an \$80 million facility at the Oconee Nuclear Station that eventually will reduce by 90 percent low-level nuclear waste produced by the plant, company officials said.

Spokeswoman Mary Boyd of the Charlotte-based utility said Duke employees have begun preliminary work on the planned two-story, 56,000-square-foot facility. It is scheduled to be completed by late 1985.

The utility currently treats low-level waste at an auxiliary building at the Oconee station, but the new facility's sophisticated equipment will allow for a big reduction in the volume of waste produced.

"It really will give us more flexibility and control over our operations at Oconee," Ms. Boyd said.

"It'll not only help us out, but it'll help the entire low-level waste situation for the state."



By Steve Matthews

The News Oconee-Pickens bureau

The Oconee station produces up to 75,000 cubic feet of low-level waste per year, which is shipped to Barnwell for permanent disposal by Chem-Nuclear Services Inc.

State officials have limited the amount of waste that can be buried at Barnwell, one of three commercial disposal sites in the nation. Other sites are in Washington and Nevada.

Low-level waste includes items con-

See Nuclear, Page 3A

Nuclear

Continued from Page 1A

taminated by radiation, such as disposable clothing, rags, papers, plastic bags and cartons, said Tony Owen, superintendent of technical services at the Oconee station.

The new facility will not affect shipments of radioactive wastes that Duke instituted recently from the Oconee station to McGuire Nuclear Station near Charlotte. Those shipments contain high-level nuclear wastes.

While some preliminary construction work has started, Owen said full-scale construction is scheduled to begin in early 1982.

The facility is scheduled to begin operation in 1986.

"If we have problems, though, we may see delays," Owen said.

Duke officials believe the project is worth its estimated cost of \$80 million. The facility will save the utility the cost of shipment and disposal of waste at Barnwell.

"We definitely feel the facility will be cost-effective," Owen said.

Using available technology, the facility will treat liquid and solid radioactive waste. Owen estimated that it will reduce the volume of solid waste by 90-95 percent and the volume of liquid waste by 85 percent.

Liquid wastes will be reduced by sophisticated cement and chemical processes that include evaporation, volume reduction and solidification. The liquid wastes must be made solid before shipment, Owen said.

Solid wastes will be incinerated and the resulting ashes will be

lidified before shipment, he said.

New equipment for processing the wastes will cost \$10 million to \$20 million, Duke officials said.

Owen said he was concerned that some "licensing issues" might hold up the project.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission spokesman Joe Gilliland said the federal agency has been informed of the project, but has not reviewed it.

NRC officials are not sure if operation of the waste facility will require an amendment to the Oconee license. The commission staff probably will study the issue next

spring, Gilliland said.

The commission is pressing utilities across the nation to reduce the volume of low-level waste produced, he said.

A cutback in the waste produced by the nation's nuclear power plants would extend the operating lifetimes of existing commercial disposal sites, Gilliland said. It would also reduce the number of waste shipments.

The NRC issued a policy statement on Oct. 16 asking utilities to "explore extensively ways of reducing waste volume," he said.

Don Plotnik
Rt. 2 Bluebird Lane
Cantrel, S.C. 29630

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Betty Tenick
M.C.

Mr. Carlton C. Kammerer
Director, Office of Congressional Affairs
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

SOUTH CAROLINA.

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June 20, 1979

The Honorable Lamar Gudger
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gudger:

I am pleased to respond to your letter dated April 2, 1979 regarding the status of the Oconee Nuclear Station operated by Duke Power Company.

The three units at the Oconee Nuclear Station are pressurized water reactors and each unit utilizes a nuclear steam supply system designed by Babcock and Wilcox. The nuclear steam supply systems for Oconee are substantially identical to the Three Mile Island facility. However, significant differences in facility design between Oconee and Three Mile Island do exist in the emergency power supply systems and the auxiliary feedwater systems. The Oconee units utilize automatically dispatched hydro units for their emergency power supply while the Three Mile Island units utilize automatic starting diesel generators. The hydro units utilized at Oconee have performed satisfactorily as an emergency power source and there are no immediate plans to require a change to diesel generators as a source of emergency power.

After the Three Mile Island accident the Oconee units' auxiliary feedwater systems were re-reviewed by the NRC staff using the information provided in the Oconee Final Safety Analysis Report and from additional information obtained through telephone conversations with representatives of the licensee, Duke Power Company. A summary of the results of this re-review, which formed the basis for the NRC staff's position that the Oconee auxiliary feedwater system required upgrading, is contained in Appendix L of NUREG-560 (Enclosure 1). Table 2-9 of that report provides a comparison of the auxiliary feedwater systems for the Oconee and Three Mile Island facilities.

By Order dated May 7, 1979, the Commission confirmed a commitment on the part of Duke Power Company to undertake a series of immediate and longer term actions to, among other things, increase the capability and reliability of the auxiliary feedwater systems. Subsequently, Mr. Harold Denton, Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, found that Duke Power had satisfactorily complied with the Commission's Order and, on May 18, gave permission for resumption or continued operation of the Oconee units. Copies of the Commission Order and Mr. Denton's May 18 letter to Duke Power are included as Enclosures 2 and 3.

There has been no investigation of alleged release of waste water containing radioactive materials from the Oconee units during the past year. However, there was a liquid release at Oconee in January 1977, which resulted in the imposition of a civil penalty in the amount of sixteen

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Honorable Lamar Gudger

-2-

thousand dollars (\$16,000). A summary of the release and the subsequent NRC inspection and enforcement activities is provided in Enclosure 4. Additionally, Oconee Unit 3 recently experienced an overflow of about 2000 gallons of radioactive water from the borated water storage tank with about 200 to 300 gallons being released outside the auxiliary building but remaining onsite. A copy of the preliminary notification report is provided as Enclosure 5.

A Resident Inspector has been assigned to the station since December 18, 1978. In addition to the inspection activities conducted by the Resident Inspector, 24 inspections involving 14 NRC inspectors were conducted during January, February and March of 1979. During the year 1978, a total of 112 inspections were conducted at Oconee Nuclear Station that involved 25 NRC inspectors. Copies of NRC inspection reports, enforcement correspondence, and licensee's responses are routinely made available for review by the public in the Oconee Public Library at Walhalla, South Carolina and the NRC Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Since April 1, 1979, we have performed inspection activities on each of the three work shifts at Oconee on a seven-day per week basis. There has been from one to three inspectors at the Oconee Nuclear Station each day since this extensive effort began. This inspection effort has been primarily directed at ensuring that appropriate preventative and corrective measures have been undertaken at the Oconee Nuclear Station as a result of the "lessons learned" at Three Mile Island.

In summary, we have concluded that the Oconee facility can be operated without undue risk to the public health and safety for the reasons set forth in the May 7 Order which included, among other things, (1) actions taken to increase the reliability of the auxiliary feedwater system; (2) additional training of Oconee operating staff concerning the Three Mile Island accident and characteristics of B&W systems requiring timely operator actions; (3) more conservative setpoints for safety systems; and (4) increased inspection effort and direct observations of the Oconee staff's performance.

We trust the above comments are responsive to your inquiry. If we can be of further assistance to you or your staff, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Cleared with all Cmr's. by SECY C/R
Retyped in SECY to incorporate Cmr.

Original Signed by
Joseph M. Hendrie

Joseph M. Hendrie

Enclosures:

1. NUREG-0560
2. Commission Order on Oconee dtd 5/7/79

3. Ltr Denton to Parker dtd 5/18/79

4. Summary of Event and Inspection Activities

5. Preliminary Notification of Event -

PNO-79-119 dtd 5/21/79

DATE

See previous yellows for concurrences

EDO/MPA

SECY

OCA

TCombs

6/15/79



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

June 20, 1979

The Honorable Lamar Gudger
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gudger:

I am pleased to respond to your letter dated April 2, 1979 regarding the status of the Oconee Nuclear Station operated by Duke Power Company.

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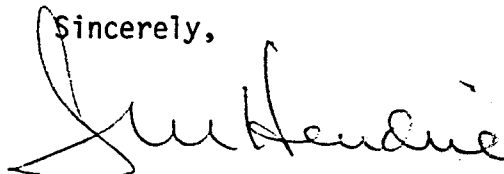
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We trust the above comments are responsive to your inquiry. If we can be of further assistance to you or your staff, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. Hendrie

Enclosures:

1. NUREG-0560
2. Commission Order on Oconee dtd 5/7/79
3. Ltr Denton to Parker dtd 5/18/79
4. Summary of Event and Inspection Activities
5. Preliminary Notification of Event -
PNO-79-119 dtd 5/21/79

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LAMAR GUDGER
11TH DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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April 2, 1979

Mr. Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Mr. Hendrie:


The calamity at Three Mile Island, Pa., has alarmed the nation and attracted the attention of all of us here in Congress.

Communications from my constituents and concern expressed by persons in North Carolina knowledgeable about nuclear energy and electric power generation prompt me to write this letter requesting a status report on the security of the nuclear generating facilities known as Oconee 1, 2 and 3, operated by Duke Power Company and located on Lake Keowee west of Greenville, South Carolina.

We have been informed that one of these plants was investigated for alleged release of waste water containing radioactive materials last year. It is our understanding that each of the three units mentioned was constructed by Babcock and Wilcox on a design substantially identical to that used in the construction of the plant at Three Mile Island, and that each of the Oconee facilities used pressurized water reactors.

NRR/IE
Please consider this letter a request for a status report on the security of the Oconee plants and that each of these plants be inspected if your Commission has not undertaken such an inspection in recent months.

Should such inspection determine that a hazard does exist, in light of the Three Mile Island experience where a similarly constructed plant also uses a pressurized water reactor, I would appreciate being advised of what steps are taken to protect the public.

Sincerely,

Lamar Gudger
Member of Congress

LG:rvh



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

April 10, 1979


The Honorable Lemar Gudger
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gudger:

Chairman Hendrie has asked me to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 2, 1979 requesting a status report on security at Oconee 1, 2 and 3 in view of Three Mile Island.

Your letter will receive our prompt attention and a reply will be forwarded to you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


Carlton Kammerer, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs