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 50-287 Oconee Nuclear Station, Unit 3, Duke Power Co. 05000287
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 PARKER, W.O. Duke Power Co.
 RECIP. NAME RECIPIENT AFFILIATION
 DENTON, H.R. Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: Responds to NRC 791023 ltr re containment purging & venting during normal operation. Often necessary to purge reactor bldg prior to or following cold shutdown to allow personnel entry to perform safety-related functions.

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 TITLE: Containment Purging

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DUKE POWER COMPANY

POWER BUILDING

422 SOUTH CHURCH STREET, CHARLOTTE, N. C. 28242

WILLIAM O. PARKER, JR.
VICE PRESIDENT
STEAM PRODUCTION

December 19, 1979

TELEPHONE: AREA 704
373-4083

Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Attention: Mr. R. W. Reid, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch No. 4

Re: Oconee Nuclear Station
Docket Nos. 50-269, -270, -287

Dear Sir:

In response to the NRC letter of October 23, 1979 concerning containment purging and venting during normal operation, the following is provided in response to the Staff's interim position.

With regard to limiting purging, it is often necessary to purge the Reactor Building (RB) prior to or following cold shutdown conditions to allow personnel entry at allowable airborne activity limits in order to perform a number of safety-related functions. Among these are:

- a. depressurization of core flood tanks prior to reduced reactor coolant system pressure and temperature.
- b. inspection of components and piping for leakage at full temperature and pressure.
- c. inspections of components and piping at full temperature and pressure to verify operability in those cases where the inspection might not be meaningful at cold shutdown conditions.
- d. performance of various system valve lineups in the RB which are required during heatup and cooldown.

It continues to be our position that purging of the RB will be minimized to the extent possible consistent with operational requirements, Technical Specification requirements, and with the goals of maintaining personnel exposure as low as reasonably achievable.

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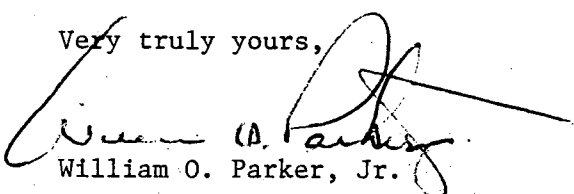
Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director
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With regard to limitation of valve position during purging, the RB purge system at Oconeé will not operate with the purge valves 50% open. The purge fan can operate at 22,000 cfs and effectively purge the RB atmosphere. However, the purge fan trips on low fan suction pressure at flows below 12,000 cfs. With the purge valves partially opened, not only is the purge fan not likely to operate, but also, even if it were to operate, the time required to adequately purge the RB would be significantly increased.

With regard to providing at least one automatic signal which is uninhibited and operable to initiate valve closure, the design of the Oconeé system continually maintains the automatic trip signal to the purge valves. No modifications in this regard are deemed necessary.

As stated in my letter of September 25, 1979 an evaluation of the Oconeé containment purge system has been initiated utilizing the guidance provided by the Staff. This evaluation is still in progress. Upon completion of this evaluation, appropriate actions will be taken.

Very truly yours,

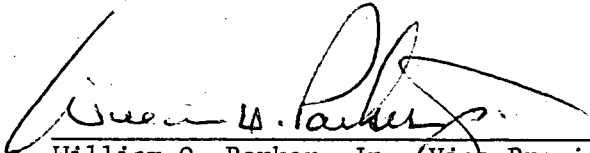


William O. Parker, Jr.

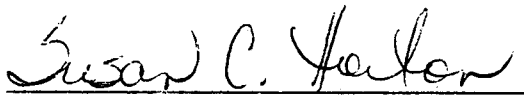
RLG:scs

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WILLIAM O. PARKER, JR., being duly sworn, states that he is Vice President of Duke Power Company; that he is authorized on the part of said Company to sign and file with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission this document; and that all statements and matters set forth therein are true and correct to the best of his knowledge.


William O. Parker, Jr., Vice President

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 19th day of December, 1979.


Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

December 8, 1982