

CASE

(CITIZENS ASSN. FOR SOUND ENERGY)

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February 24, 1983

'83 FEB 28 P1:35

Administrative Judge Marshall E. Miller
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dr. Richard Cole, Member
Atomic Safety & Licensing Board
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dr. Kenneth A. McCollom, Dean
Division of Engineering, Architecture
and Technology
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: In the Matter of
Application of Texas Utilities
Generating Company, et al. for
An Operating License for
Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station
Units #1 and #2 (CPSES)
Docket Nos. 50-445 and 50-446

Applicants' News Releases

Attached is another example of Applicants sending out a news release with a new I&E Report attached. CASE had not received the report from the NRC Region IV office when we were called by reporters yesterday with the newspapers and today (while we were trying to complete our mailing to the Board of our Provisional Proposed Findings of Fact) by IV reporters. We received the report today.

Since we had not even received the report itself by the time the newspaper reporters called us about their stories, and had not had time to even read the report by the time the TV reporters called today, our only comment had to be that we could not comment until we had seen the report itself (but that we were looking forward to reading it and to cross-examining the NRC Staff regarding it and other matters involving the Walsh/Doyle allegations).

By this really beautiful coup of timing, Applicants were not only able to try the issue in the media, but totally unopposed as well. All the TV stations tonight are carrying stories about how the NRC has stated that everything's fine at Comanche Peak, and the pipe supports are fine -- along with such comments from utility spokesmen as "Maybe the problem wasn't with the supports but with the people who worked at the plant" and that the people who had made the allegations didn't know about the other back-up processes which the utility had to go through before the pipe supports were completed.

Now that's trying it in the press for you! We'll have to hand it to them -- the timing was beautiful!

Respectfully submitted,

CASE (CITIZENS ASSOCIATION FOR SOUND ENERGY)

(Mrs.) Juanita Ellis, President

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cc: Service List

DS03

Comanche Peak supports safe, NRC says

By Bill Lodge

Staff Writer of The News

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has sided with Texas Utilities Co. in its contention that pipe supports at the firm's Comanche Peak nuclear power plant will not fail during a major accident.

Former plant engineers Mark Walsh and Jack Doyle charged in 1982 that Texas Utilities' refusal to consider thermal-expansion stress in the design of thousands of key pipe supports could mean that the supports might fail if a loss-of-coolant accident increased plant air temperatures to 280 degrees Fahrenheit. Such a failure, they said, could cause a meltdown.

Texas Utilities officials maintain that consideration of thermal-expansion stress is not required by the American Society of Mechanical

Engineers, and the NRC agreed with the utility company in a report released Wednesday.

An employee at ASME's New York office said Wednesday that current ASME codes require consideration of heat expansion in pipe-support design.

But Glen Madsen and Tom Westerman of the NRC regional office in Arlington said NRC engineers do not believe that the ASME employee correctly interpreted the codes.

"That's nice to know, but it avoids the obvious question of whether it (thermal-expansion stress) ought to be considered," said Bob Pollard of the Washington office of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Walsh and Doyle have suggested that the failure to guard against thermal expansion in the design of pipe supports is a generic problem

affecting many nuclear plants.

Pollard said the issue "will have to be considered sooner or later. From a public safety standpoint, the only question is whether the failure to consider thermal expansion poses a risk."

Westerman and Madsen said NRC engineers do not believe any risk is involved.

In its report, the NRC said, "None of the concerns raised by Walsh and Doyle were substantiated as demonstrating serious deficiencies in (Texas Utilities') pipe-support design program."

In a Texas Utilities news release, Comanche Peak quality assurance manager David Chapman said the NRC report "confirms the position which we have maintained all along; that is, the adequacy of final design is assured by the system of independent checks and balances we have in place."