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My name is Charles Awalt. I am Community Residence Specialist for the Westchester Developmental Disabilities Services Office of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. My office is located at 580 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York.

WDDSO has 12 group residences in the towns of Cortlandt, Ossining, and Yorktown, including the Villages of Croton, Ossining, and Briarcliff Manor which are within the 10 mile Emergency Planning Zone.

Each of our residences services 8 to 10 severely and profoundly retarded persons, including some with ambulation handicaps. The ages of our clients range from 8 to 70.

Some of our residents take medication for seizures, and some have other medical problems which require medication. Every home has a nurse and a locked medicine cabinet. Dispensation of medicine is supervised by an M.D. All prescriptions and administration of medication are recorded. If evacuation were required, staff and medication would have to go with residents.

We provide 24 hour care. Each residence has a supervisor and a total staff of about 12.

At night when the residents are sleeping we have 1 person awake on duty, and sometimes another staff person sleeps at the residence. We have a back up system of staff on call to come in in case of an emergency at night. Each of our residential staff is required to take 200 hours of formal classroom training during his or her 1st year, in addition to on the job training. This education does not include any training in recognizing or treating the effects of radiation.

Each residence owns at least one van. The residences which house wheelchair patients also have a wheelchair van.

Our residences have a system of drills for internal emergencies such as fire. We conduct 3 drills per month; one early morning, one daytime, and one early evening. It is a requirement for admission and continued residence that our clients be able to evacuate the building within 2½ minutes.

Our homes have sophisticated fire and smoke detectors.

We also have an internal emergency plan for snow days: staff people who live near a WDDSO residence know that they may be called on to staff that residence, even though it is not their regular assignment. This system depends on telephone communications.

I am not aware of any involvement on the part of WDDSO or individual residences in emergency planning for an accident at Indian Point. No supervisors have reported receiving informational brochures and none have reported participation in the March 3, 1982, drill.

Our ordinary emergency procedures call for evacuating the residents of one home to another. It is safer to keep our clients in an environment where all are familiar with them and their special needs. The logical places to evacuate in a nuclear emergency would be our 11 new fire proof and barrier free buildings outside the 10 mile EPZ.

As for transportation, we would be dependent on staff vehicles. If a nuclear emergency occurred during office hours an evacuation could probably be effected with staff vehicles from headquarters. We would have a greater problem if the emergency occurred during the night.

Although each home is equipped with an integrated fire-smoke detection system, these systems do not pick up atomic radiation. During our normal evacuation drills, the developmentally disabled residents are slow to respond in leaving the building and tend to cluster just outside the door. When the staff is trying to get the residents ready for normal operations such as going to work, movies and shopping, it takes a lot of time to get each resident dressed and in a vehicle. They move very slowly. None of the houses have tone-alert radios.

Speaking personally, I question the wisdom of evacuating south into a bottleneck. The Tappan Zee bridge (I-87) traffic is frequently slowed down to a crawl by wind, rain, snow, flat tires, etc. NO intelligent evacuation plan should depend on anyone going across the Tappan Zee Bridge. I also question the 10 mile limit, and would like to know how far away one would have to go to be really safe from a release of radiation.