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TELEPHONE
AREA CODE 716 546-2700

December 28, 1972

Mr. John F. O'Leary, Director
Directorate of Licensing
U.S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, D. C. 20545

Subject: R. E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant Unit No. 1
Docket 50-244

Dear Mr. O'Leary:

Between 1200 hours on August 31, 1972 and 1100 hours on September 1, 1972 an unplanned release of radioactive gasses occurred at the Ginna Station. This is documented by an increase in the count rate on the plant vent monitor and by the loss of gas volume from the #2 gas decay tank which was in service. During this period no other releases were in progress. One auxiliary building exhaust fan, the gross activity monitor, the iodine activity monitor and the particulate monitor were in operation.

The release rate was below Technical Specifications and involved no exposure of individuals. Calculation of the twenty-four hour average release rate as provided in the Technical Specifications Section 3.9.2.3 for this mixture indicates 0.00264 Ci/second. The limit value is calculated to be 0.0402 Ci/second as determined by Technical Specifications Section 3.9.2.1. The release was approximately six (6) percent of the limit value. During this period 228 curies were released as compared to the present normal of 5 Ci/24 hour period. The curies released were determined from the computer log print-out of the plant vent gas monitor. The concentration of the gasses determined at the vent monitor is compared to a weekly vent sample analyzed by the plant health physics and chemistry section. This sample had been taken in the morning prior to the release and showed the plant vent gas monitor to be in calibration. The gasses released, as well as the normally vented gas, all pass through charcoal and HEPA filters and no measureable iodine or particulate was released.

The incident occurred during removal of spent resins from the Spent Resin Tanks. While venting the tank to the cover gas system a three (3) psig pressure was developed in the vent header for a short period of time. This increased pressure applied to the gas cover of the charging pump leakoff collection tank was sufficient to start a siphoning effect on this tank. The collected water in this tank was emptied through its overflow drain to the sump tank and thence directly by pipe to the auxiliary building exhaust and did not present a hazard to operating personnel. When the siphoning was discovered and stopped, the charging pump leak-off tank returned to normal operation, the gas loss stopped, and the plant vent gas monitor returned to its former normal reading.

This was the first time in the plant history that the spent resin removal from the

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inquiry

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Spent Resin Tanks was performed. As a result of this incident, the written plant procedure (S4.4) for handling resin has been revised and precaution against exceeding a vent header pressure of two (2) psig has been included. This precaution is identified in two different steps of the operating instruction checkoff. If the pressure is exceeded the instruction requires that the leak-off collection tank be checked to ensure that the seal is not overflowing. A vent header pressure gauge has been installed at the spent resin control station to assist the operator in monitoring the vent header pressure while performing the release of gas from the spent resin tank. In addition, the auxiliary operator will monitor the waste gas system during the operation.

This incident has been under discussion with the compliance inspector in the ensuing period and is presented as a matter of information.

Very truly yours,


Keith W. Amish

xc: Mr. J. P. O'Reilly