

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA 16802

College of Engineering
Breazeale Nuclear Reactor

Area Code 814
865-6351

7 May 1985

Mr. Cecil R. Thomas, Chief
Standardization and Special
Projects Branch
Division of Licensing
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

License: R-2
Docket No.: 50-5

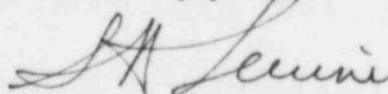
Gentlemen:

On Friday, May 3, during our annual fuel inspection, we discovered that a 12 wt.% TRIGA fuel element in the B-ring of our core had swollen to where we could not remove it from the grid. Subsequent visual inspection of this fuel element did not show any damage or obvious swelling of the fuel element. The swelling of the fuel element occurs approximately five inches above the bottom of the fuel rod. The fuel element could be raised up through the top grid plate to this position on the fuel element or lowered to this point into our fuel inspection tool. The integrity of the fuel element remains intact and there is no chance of fission product leakage from this fuel element. However, because of its inability to move through the grid plate, this fuel element will be stored and no longer used at this facility.

This fuel element swelling has no safety significance and therefore does not require any official notification. We report this for information purposes only since it may be useful to other TRIGA users.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (814) 865-3110.

Sincerely yours,



Samuel H. Levine
Professor, Nuclear Engineering
Director, Penn State Breazeale Reactor

SHL:mb

cc: R. E. Bland
W. F. Witzig
I. B. McMaster

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