

OCT 2 1979

Docket No. 50-329

The Honorable Carl Levin
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Levin:

Your letter of June 1, 1979, in response to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's letter of June 1, 1979, regarding the Three Mile Island Unit 2 incident. His observation that the containment system did not function as designed is noted. The Learning Task Force (copy enclosed), recommends that the Commission initiate containment system testing to prevent transfer of water from the TMI-2 sump had it been provided in the design.

9 to the Department of Energy concerning correspondence from Mr. Frei of Frankenmuth, Michigan has been referred to the Commission. Mr. Frei noted that a radiation detection signal could be transferred from the Three Mile Island Unit 2 containment building sump to the auxiliary building and this matter has received considerable attention within the Commission. A recently published report, "TMI-2 Lessons Learned and Short-Term Recommendations," NUREG-0578, recommends that diverse signals be provided at all reactors to prevent such a provision would have prevented the transfer of water from the TMI-2 sump had it been provided in the design.

The problem at TMI-2 was very simply that automatic containment isolation was initiated only on a containment pressure signal. Since pressure rise was quite slow, the sump pump turned on and began transferring water well before an isolation signal occurred. Subsequent investigations have revealed that, while considerable water was transferred from the reactor building sump, it did not contribute substantially to the activity in the auxiliary building as once believed. Operators turned the sump pump off about 38 minutes after the start of the event; this was well before the core was damaged. It is now certain that the source of high activity in the auxiliary building was leakage from systems which were in service subsequent to core damage, principally from the reactor coolant letdown system, portions of which are in the auxiliary building.

If we can provide any further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY R. G. SMITH

Lee V. Gossick
Executive Director for Operations

Enclosure: NUREG-0578

OFFICE	LLTF	LLTF	LLTF	ONRR	ONRR	EDO
SURNAME	RIreland:mab	RTedesco	RMattson	ECass	HDenton	LGossick
DATE	9/25/79	9/26/79	9/26/79	9/27/79	9/27/79	9/28/79

FROM: Sen. Carl Levin		ACTION CONTROL		DATES		CONTROL NO. 07367	
		COMPL DEADLINE		10/6/79			
		ACKNOWLEDGMENT				DATE OF DOCUMENT	
		INTERIM REPLY				5/11/79	
TO: DOE		FINAL REPLY				PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF:	
		FILE LOCATION				<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN	
(referred to HRC by DOE 8/30/79)						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
DESCRIPTION <input type="checkbox"/> LETTER <input type="checkbox"/> MEMO <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS					
Ltr from Stephen L. Frai re a safety feature that could have been used at TMI to prevent contamination of the environment		Mark envelope to Attn: Karen L. McCre					
CLASSIFIED DATA							
DOCUMENT/COPY NO.		CLASSIFICATION					
NUMBER OF PAGES		CATEGORY					
POSTAL REGISTRY NO.		<input type="checkbox"/> NSI <input type="checkbox"/> RD <input type="checkbox"/> FRD					
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Donna	5/11/79	Jeanne Cook	ASSIGNED TO:	DATE	NO LEGAL OBJECTIONS NOTIFY:		
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		Kanevsky			EXT. _____		
					COMMENTS, NOTIFY:		
					EXT. _____		
			JCAE NOTIFICATION RECOMMENDED: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				

NRC FORM 232
(11-75)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20512

June 11, 1979

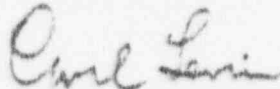
Nuclear and Other Resources
Federal Energy Department
Room 4446, Mass. Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed you will find correspondence from Mr. Stephen L. Frei of Frankenmuth, Michigan. I would appreciate your looking into this matter for me. ~~Please address any correspondence to Karen L. McCree of my staff.~~

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Carl Levin

CL/kmk
Enclosure

Dear Senator Leach,

1979 APR -9 PM 3:29

I have very carefully followed all available news information concerning the incident at the Three Mile Island plant and have found no mention of the fact that contamination of the environment could have been prevented by incorporating a radiation detector into the automatic switch responsible for turning on the sump pump that transferred contaminated water from the highly protected reactor containment cell to the unprotected auxillary building.

I hope that I don't appear foolish in writing to you about something so obvious, but I was wondering if you could find out if the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is aware of this simple safety feature which could prevent similar contamination in the event of any future nuclear accidents at other plants including the one being constructed at Midland, Michigan.

I, and likely others of your constituents, would greatly appreciate knowing that the NRC is indeed aware of this area of concern as I am sure that the NRC is, at this time, more concerned with the cause of the accident itself.

Respectfully,

Stephen L. Frei
Stephen L. Frei
11576 King Rd.
Frankenmuth, Mich. 48734

04/04/79