

NORTHEAST UTILITIES



THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY
WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ELECTRIC COMPANY
HOLYOKE WATER POWER COMPANY
NORTHEAST UTILITIES SERVICE COMPANY
NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY

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June 6, 1985

Docket No. 50-423
F0779A

Dr. Thomas E. Murley
Regional Administrator
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region I
631 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Dear Dr. Murley:

Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 3
Reporting of Potential Significant Deficiencies
in Accordance with 10CFR50.55(e):
Core Exit Thermocouples (SD-82)

In a May 9, 1985 telephone conversation between your Mr. T. Rebelowski and our Mr. R. K. McCarthy, Northeast Nuclear Energy Company reported a potential significant deficiency in the construction of Millstone Unit No. 3 in accordance with 10CFR50.55(e). The potential significant deficiency involves the core exit thermocouple system provided by Westinghouse.

While performing equipment qualification testing of the core exit thermocouples, Westinghouse noted the total system error exceeded the errors assumed in the Westinghouse Emergency Response Guidelines. These guidelines are the basis used to develop the Millstone Unit No. 3 Emergency Operating Procedures.

The core exit thermocouples are used to provide an input to the following safety-related systems at Millstone Unit No. 3:

- 1) Reactor Coolant System Subcooled Margin Monitor
- 2) Inadequate Core Cooling Detection System

Although these two systems provide no automatic safety functions, the indication and alarms are utilized to initiate operator procedures. Since some plant operator actions are based on this information, a temperature uncertainty could result in consequences more severe than currently described in the FSAR accident analysis. Until more information is obtained from Westinghouse, the specific safety implications cannot be determined.

Westinghouse has been performing an environmental qualification test on the core exit thermocouples, connectors, potting adapters, splices, and reference junction boxes. An evaluation of the test results indicated an error could be experienced following a postulated high energy line break, but the exact cause of this error has not been determined.

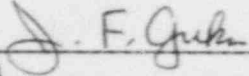
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Until additional information is obtained, the corrective action and final report cannot be provided. We will provide an update on this matter by August 29, 1985.

Very truly yours,

NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY



J. F. Opeka
Senior Vice President

cc: Mr. J. M. Taylor, Director
Division of Inspection and Enforcement
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555