

September 11, 1996

Public  
DE-01

EA 96-335

Mr. W. T. Subalusky, Jr.  
Site Vice President  
LaSalle County Station  
Commonwealth Edison Company  
2601 North 21st Road  
Marseilles, IL 61341

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NOS. 50-373/96009, 50-374/96009

Dear Mr. Subalusky:

This refers to the special inspection conducted by Kerry D. Ihnen and Hershell A. Walker of this office on July 17 to August 20, 1996, at your LaSalle County Station, Units 1 & 2. The purpose of the inspection was to review the circumstances surrounding the injection of quantities of foam sealant into the safety-related service water tunnel and to determine whether activities authorized by the license were conducted safely and in accordance with NRC requirements. Areas examined during the inspection are identified in the enclosed report. Within these areas, the inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observation of activities in progress. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with those members of your staff identified in the enclosed report.

Based on the results of this inspection, several apparent violations of NRC requirements were identified and are being considered for escalated enforcement action in accordance with the "General Statement of Policy and Procedure for NRC Enforcement Actions" (Enforcement Policy), NUREG-1600.

One of the apparent violations, involving failure to provide adequate control over safety related maintenance activities, was very significant and was the initiating cause of the inadvertent injection of sealant into the service water tunnel. The injected sealant material had the potential to cause the loss of the ultimate heat sink for both reactor units. Other apparent violations, involving failures to take adequate and timely actions to correct the service water problems, were also very significant because effective actions could have significantly reduced the period of risk.

Another apparent violation involving failure to perform a 50.59 safety evaluation or screening, was significant because one of the changes appeared to include an unreviewed safety question. Finally, apparent violations were identified involving inadequate procedures or failure to follow procedures, and failure to provide adequate records of maintenance and inspection activities. The specific examples were less significant, but these issues are important as they reflect the level of discipline utilized by your staff in conducting licensed activities. The details pertaining to each apparent violation are described in the enclosed inspection report.

No Notice of Violation is presently being issued for these inspection findings. In addition, the number and characterization of apparent violations described in the enclosed inspection report may change as a result of further NRC review.

A pre-decisional enforcement conference to discuss these apparent violations has been scheduled for September 27, 1996. The decision to hold a pre-decisional enforcement conference does not mean that the NRC has determined that a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. This conference is being held to obtain information to enable the NRC to make an enforcement decision, including a common understanding of the facts and circumstances surrounding the violations, their root causes, your opportunities to identify the apparent violations sooner, your corrective actions, and the significance of the issues.

In addition, this is an opportunity for you to point out any errors in our inspection report and for you to provide any information concerning your perspectives on 1) the severity of the violations, 2) the application of the factors that the NRC considers when it determines the amount of a civil penalty that may be assessed in accordance with Section VI.B.2 of the Enforcement Policy, and 3) any other application of the Enforcement Policy to this case, including the exercise of discretion in accordance with Section VII.

You will be advised by separate correspondence of the results of our deliberations on this matter. No response regarding these apparent violations is required at this time.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Sincerely,

Original signed by John A. Grobe, Acting Deputy  
James L. Caldwell, Acting Director  
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-373, 50-374  
License Nos: NPF-11; NPF-18

Enclosures:

1. Inspection Report  
No. 50-373/96009(DRP); 374/96009(DRP)
2. Enforcement Policy: Section V, "Pre-decisional Enforcement Conferences"

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No Notice of Violation is presently being issued for these inspection findings. In addition, please be advised that the number and characterization of apparent violations described in the enclosed inspection report may change as a result of further NRC review.

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In addition, this is an opportunity for you to point out any errors in our inspection report and for you to provide any information concerning your perspectives on 1) the severity of the violations, 2) the application of the factors that the NRC considers when it determines the amount of a civil penalty that may be assessed in accordance with Section VI.B.2 of the Enforcement Policy, and 3) any other application of the Enforcement Policy to this case, including the exercise of discretion in accordance with Section VII.

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Sincerely,

James L. Caldwell, Acting Director  
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-373, 50-374  
License Nos: NPF-11; NPF-18

Enclosures:

1. Inspection Report  
No. 50-373/96009(DRP); 374/96003(DRP)
2. Enforcement Policy: Section V, "Pre-decisional Enforcement Conferences"

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DATE	9/5/96		9/5/96		9/ /96		

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cc w/encl: D. A. Sager, Vice President,  
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