

**SCHOOL
OF
NUCLEAR ENGINEERING**



Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana 47907



REPORT ON REACTOR OPERATIONS

For the Period

January 1, 1994 to December 31, 1994

PURDUE UNIVERSITY REACTOR-1

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

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Prepared by

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report is submitted to meet the requirements set forth in 10 CFR 50.59 and the technical specifications of the Purdue University Reactor (PUR-1) for the period January 1, 1994 to December 31, 1994.

During the reporting period of 1994 a total of 318 people visited the reactor facility. Those people included 84 different groups, of which 59 groups were for the purpose of maintenance or surveillance testing, 10 groups were for class purposes, 12 groups were pre-scheduled tours, and 3 groups were participants in our reactor sharing program.

2. PLANT DESIGN AND OPERATIONAL CHANGES

2.1 Facility Design Changes

There were no design changes to the facility in 1994.

2.2 Performance Characteristics

The operation of the PUR-1 facility continued satisfactorily during the reporting period. During the visual inspection of the surfaces of two representative fuel plates no changes were identified. This inspection included any defects that might compromise the integrity of the cladding including any evidence of corrosion. Satisfactory performance of the fuel continued during the year.

2.3 Changes in Operating Procedures Concerning Safety of Facility Operations

No changes in the operating procedures of the facility.

2.4 Results of Surveillance Tests and Inspections

2.4.1 Reactivity Limits

The reactivity worths of the control rods were determined to be as follows:

Shim-safety #1 - 5.06%

Shim-safety #2 - 2.71%

Regulating Rod - 0.26%

The worth curves of the control rods were checked after the inspection and the excess was determined to be 0.51%. The shutdown margin was determined to be 7.52% based on these values.

The inspection of the control rods was completed on July 18, 1994 with no evidence of change or deterioration observed.

No experiment was placed in the reactor pool during the year that would require the determination of its reactivity during the initial criticality following its installation.

2.4.2 Reactor Safety Systems

Each prestartup check included a channel test for each safety system, provided the shutdown exceed 8 hours or if the system was repaired or de-energized.

Each reactor safety system had a channel check performed at time intervals of less than 4 hours during operation.

On Oct. 19, 1994 the electronic calibration of all safety channels was completed.

The irradiation of gold foils for a power calibration was done on November 3 and 17, 1994. The calibration indicated that the actual power was 4% below the indicated power level at 100 watts and that the system was nonlinear in a conservative direction.

During the prestartup which precedes each run, the radiation area monitors and the continuous air monitor were checked for normal operation. During 1994 the calibration of the radiation area monitors and the continuous air monitor was completed on March 31 and September 30.

Following the control rod inspections, the rod drop times were measured on July 19, 1994. The rod drop times fell between 538 and 610 milliseconds. These values are consistent with past measurements and are well within the specification limits of 1 second.

2.4.3 Primary Coolant System

The weekly measurements of the pH of the primary coolant fell between 4.9 and 5.6 during 1994. These value are within the specification limits of 5.5 ± 1.0 .

During the weekly checks and the prestartup check which proceeds each run, the conductivity of the primary coolant was measured and the values never exceeded 1.64 micromhos-cm. This represents a resistivity of more than 600,000 ohm/cm which exceeds the lower limit of 330,000 ohm/cm as given in the specifications.

The specification of 13 feet of water was always either met or exceeded, according to the prestarted check list that was completed prior to each reactor run.

Monthly samples of the primary coolant was collected and analyzed by personnel from Radiological and Environmental Management for gross alpha and beta activity. No activity was identified in the samples which would indicate failure of the fuel plates.

2.4.4 Containment

Readings between 0.06 and 0.16 inches of water were recorded weekly for the negative pressure in the reactor room.

The semi-annual checks made in 1994 for the proper operation of the inlet and outlet dampers and the air conditioner were completed on Feb. 22 and Nov. 3. All worked satisfactorily.

Selected fuel plates were visually inspected on July 18, 1994. The surface condition of fuel plate #4-3-73 indicated no change from the last inspection, and the cladding of the other inspected plates identified no changes.

2.4.5 Experiments

The mass of the singly encapsulated samples and the flux of the reactor are such that the complete release of all gaseous, particulate, and volatile components of the samples would not result in doses in excess of 10% of the equivalent annual doses as stated in 10 CFR 20.

No samples of unknown composition or that required double encapsulation were submitted for irradiation.

2.5 Changes, Tests and Experiments Requiring Commission Authorization

During 1994 no changes, or experiments which required authorization from the Commission pursuant to 10 CFR 50.59 (a) were performed.

2.6 Changes in Facility Staff

There were no changes in the Facility Staff during the year.

3. POWER GENERATION

Operation of the PUR-1 during 1994 consisted of 19 runs which generated 130,386 watt-minutes of energy and covered an integrated running time of 57.2 hours.

4. UNSCHEDULED SHUTDOWNS

Five uncheduled shutdowns occurred during 1994. One of these shutdowns resulted from operator error when the operator turned the range switch on the linear channel in the wrong direction resulting in an over range trip. The four remaining uncheduled shutdowns were associated with noise on the log N channel generating false period indications. The problem was traced to a faulty ground connection on one of the cables to the instrument. Replacing the cable has cured the problem.

5. MAINTENANCE

Only routine maintenance was required during the reporting period.

6. CHANGES, TESTS AND EXPERIMENTS

No changes, tests or experiments were carried out without prior Commission approval pursuant to the requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 (b).

7. RADIOACTIVE EFFLUENT RELEASES

No measurable amount of radioactive effluents were released to the environs beyond our effective control, as measured at or prior to the point of such release.