

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

July 11, 1979

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-79-232

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by IE staff on this date.

Facility: Metropolitan Edison Company
Three Mile Island Unit 2 (DN 50-320)
Middletown, Pennsylvania

Subject: DISCOVERY OF AIRBORNE BETA ACTIVITY IN THE AUXILIARY
AND FUEL HANDLING BUILDING

On July 4, 1979, an NRC Inspector was informed by the licensee's contractor, Radiation Management Corporation, that they had received a filter paper which was determined to have radiation levels of 1.2 Rads per hour on contact as measured with a portable radiation survey meter. The filter paper was collected with a portable air sampler from the Fuel Handling Building during the period 1400 to 2000 hours on June 30, 1979. Upon notification NRC Inspectors initiated actions to perform confirmatory measurements performed during the week of July 2, 1979 verified that high Beta activity was present in the Auxiliary and Fuel Handling Building.

The licensee indicated that the Auxiliary and the Fuel Handling Buildings Ventilation Systems were not operating at full capacity during the period when high Beta activity was observed.

Licensee records show that approximately 97 individuals made entries into the subject area during the period of apparent high airborne activity. The individuals wore as a minimum, full protective anti-C clothing and full face respirators.

Arrangements are being made by the licensee to conduct urine, fecal and whole body counting analysis of selected individuals who entered the area. Weekly whole body counting being routinely conducted show no significant signs of internal deposition.

Further evaluation and follow-up by the licensee and NRC are in progress, including radiochemical analysis of samples which are being sent to the Radiological and Environmental Services Laboratory, Idaho Falls, Idaho, an NRC contractor.

Media interest is expected because of the recent Three Mile Island Unit No. 2 Incident. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. The licensee does not plan to issue a press release. NRC does plan to issue a press release.

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