

January 14, 1981

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-TMI- 81-02

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 NRC staff on this date.

Facility: Metropolitan Edison Company
Three Mile Island, Unit 2
Middletown, Pennsylvania
Docket Number 50-320

Subject: ACID SPILL TO GROUND OUTSIDE TURBINE BUILDING

On January 13, 1981, at approximately 4:45 p.m., an estimated 600 gallons of concentrated sulfuric acid siphoned from a storage tank, through two valves, and out a 2 inch flanged pipe and spilled onto the ground on the south side of the Unit 2 turbine building. Apparently the isolation valve on the 2 inch outside line was either inadvertently opened or left open following maintenance on the system.

A dam was constructed on site in the storm drainage system to prevent spread of the acid and neutralization with caustic was begun immediately. Preliminary sampling indicated that no acid was measurable in any releases from the island and no personnel injuries resulted from the spill.

The acid appeared to seep into a pipe chase containing wiring for the security system. The acid in the chase was neutralized and the licensee has begun a water flush with closed-loop circulating water to prevent further damage to the pipe chase and contents. No disruption of the security system due to the spill have been observed. No radiation or radioactive material was involved in this event.

Licensee investigation into the spill is in progress.

Media interest may occur due to the sensitivity of Three Mile Island matters. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Environmental Protection Agency have been informed. A press release is not planned by the NRC nor the licensee.

The NRC TMI Program Office received notification of the spill by Unit 2 operations personnel at approximately 5:30 p.m., on January 13, 1981, and this information was current as of 11:00 a.m., on January 14, 1981.

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