

April 30, 1981

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-TMI-81-10

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: ELEVATED TRITIUM LEVELS IN THE FUEL HANDLING BUILDING



At approximately 10:00 p.m. on April 29, 1981, licensee representatives obtained analytical results for airborne concentration of 3.1×10^{-5} uCi/cc (tritium, H-3) for a grab air sample taken between 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. earlier in the day. The sampling process was performed while EPICOR-II processed water, which was contaminated with H-3, was transferred to partially fill the "B" Spent Fuel Pool, which will be used to support the Submerged Demineralizer System operation. This sample was taken inside the pool. Subsequent samples were immediately taken at the 347' elevation (working area) of the Fuel Handling Building adjacent to the "B" pool.

The second sample results became available at 4:45 a.m., April 30, 1981, which was 2.2×10^{-5} uCi/cc (H-3). The 347' elevation was subsequently declared an airborne radioactivity area. The transfer process was secured at 2:30 a.m., April 30, 1981.

At approximately 10:00 a.m., a sample analysis indicated 1.2×10^{-6} uCi/cc, (H-3) and personnel entry into the area was resumed in that airborne (H-3) concentration was reduced to below 25 percent of MPC (maximum permissible concentration per 10 CFR 20).

Licensee and NRC review of this event continues.

Media interest has been expected because of public sensitivity to TMI related events. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. Neither the NRC or the licensee have made plans to issue a press release.

This preliminary notification is issued for information only and no further action other than routine followup by NRC is anticipated.

The NRC TMI Program Office received notification of this occurrence at 7:45 a.m. today while monitoring the Reactor Building entry.

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