



NRC NEWS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Thursday, October 10, 1996)

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has sent two letters to Northeast Utilities (NU) regarding the Haddam Neck and Millstone nuclear plants.

The text of each letter is attached.

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Attachments. October 9, 1996

Mr. Ted C. Feigenbaum
Executive Vice President and
Chief Nuclear Officer
Northeast Utilities Service Company
c/o Mr. Terry L. Harpster
Director - Nuclear Licensing Services
P.O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

SUBJECT: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 13, 1996, LETTER,
REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - HADDAM NECK
PLANT

Dear Mr. Feigenbaum:

The NRC staff has received your September 13, 1996, response to our August 9, 1996, 10 CFR 50.54(f) request for additional information. This letter required you to (1) update and resubmit your basis for continued operation of Haddam Neck, and (2) address the implications of NRC- and Northeast Utilities- identified degraded and non-conforming conditions requiring corrective action to meet the Haddam Neck Plant's design basis.

In your response, you addressed the second item and stated that the first item could not be addressed until "additional reviews and corrective actions" have been completed. You committed to not restart Haddam Neck until the actions discussed in your letter were completed. You also committed to coordinate with the NRC staff to develop an inspection and submittal schedule for these activities. Corrective actions requiring licensing actions should be submitted with sufficient time to support staff review. Your commitment to not restart the plant until the corrective actions have been completed is an acceptable interim response to the August 9, 1996, letter.

The corrective actions you have outlined are extensive. I am also aware that you are in the process of updating the Haddam Neck economic analysis. It is our understanding that you intend to use this updated analysis to aid in making decisions about whether to operate Haddam Neck in the future. While this reanalysis is being performed, certain tasks have been postponed (including putting new fuel in the spent fuel pool) until completion of the reanalysis.

Two more issues regarding recent plant performance should also be included and addressed

as corrective actions prior to plant restart. These issues were identified during the augmented inspection team (AIT) review of events occurring between August 22 and September 4, 1996, related to reactor coolant system (RCS) inventory and cooling capacity (Inspection 50-213/96-80) and during the August 14, 1996, emergency preparedness (EP) exercise (Inspection 50-213/96-07). Your performance revealed some fundamental weaknesses in plant operations and in emergency response activities. While some corrective actions have already been taken or are planned in response to the recent RCS events and the EP exercise, it is important that you determine the root causes of these weaknesses and take broad corrective actions.

Attachment 1 to your letter describes Haddam Neck Plant Configuration Management Plan (CMP) restart related activities that provide reasonable assurance that the future operation of Haddam Neck will be conducted in conformance with the Commission's regulations. Since you have concluded there are some similarities in weaknesses between Millstone and Haddam Neck, information on your assessment and views on the need for an independent corrective action verification program (ICAVP) at Haddam Neck should be provided as soon as possible after your decision regarding future operation of the facility.

Sincerely,

/s/

Frank J. Miraglia, Acting Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-213

October 9, 1996

Mr. Ted C. Feigenbaum
Executive Vice President and
Chief Nuclear Officer
Northeast Utilities Service Company
c/o Mr. Terry Harpster
Director - Nuclear Licensing Services
P.O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Dear Mr. Feigenbaum:

Effective October 1, 1996, Northeast Utilities implemented a major reorganization, including the establishment of a recovery organization for each of the Millstone units. We recognize this reorganization may have an impact on your previous plans and schedules for recovery of each of the Millstone units and Haddam Neck. Your earlier July 2, 1996, letter provided the Operational Readiness Plan for Millstone Unit 3. Subsequently, the NRC has met with Northeast Utilities to discuss this plan and the status of your restart activities. At your earliest convenience, please provide us information on how the Operational Readiness Plan and schedule of important milestones are impacted by your reorganization. This information is needed so that we can appropriately plan our resources to oversee your activities. Our September 12, 1996, letter to you provided a copy of the NRC Restart Assessment Plan.

Sincerely,

/s/

Phillip F. McKee, Director
Northeast Utilities Project Directorate

Division of Reactor

Projects - I/II

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-213, 50-245, 50-336
and 50-423