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# NRC to require state Emergency Action plans

By COLLINE E. CANRIGHT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will require States to have concurred-in Emergency Action plans before a nuclear power plant will be allowed to operate in that state. This requirement will be applied to states with existing nuclear facilities as well as states that have facilities under construction.

Indiana, with two plants now under construction, Northern Indiana Public Service Company's Bailly I, and Public Service Indiana's Marble Hill, has no Emergency Action plan at this time.

The commission representatives for Region III reported to attending utilities at a meeting yesterday in Glen Ellyn, IL., that legislation is now pending in Congress on this question and they might as well prepare for it.

The purpose of the meeting was to present to utilities new proposals for up-coming re-evaluation of emergency preparedness plans.

The legislation in question is Senate Bill No. 562, NRC authorization bill, includes the Hart-Simmons amendment that states no nuclear power plants may operate in states that do not have an NRC concurred emergency response plan.

As of now, of the 25 states that have operating nuclear reactors, only nine have plans that are concurred by the NRC. Also, seven states in which nuclear power plants are under construction have no plans. Indiana is one of these states.

If the states do not develop emergency plans, the legislation states, operating licenses for new plants will not be issued, and existing facilities will be shut down if plans are not developed by June 1, 1980.

The legislation will also provide that after 1980 the NRC must approve plans instead of just concur with them, and policies that are now just suggested and used as guidelines for the planning of state plans will become official commission regulations.

The legislation passed the Senate by a vote of 97 to 1 and is expected to pass the House this fall.

Next, an assessment of improvements in state and local plans was presented. Improvements include standardized accident assessment criteria; quicker transfer of information during an accident, training of state and local officials in radiation monitoring and response, improvement of planning guidance, and better coordination of utility action plans with state and local government plans.

Since a review is being conducted of all utility emergency plans, a draft proposal for emergency planning acceptance criteria was presented to the utilities. Five main criteria must be met before the office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) will approve a utility plan. They are:

—Effective coordination of emergency activities among all organizations having a response role. The utility must provide an onsite emergency coordinator at all times, who will have authority to initiate any emergency actions set down in the plan. They must also provide for quicker mobilization of emergency personnel. State plans must provide tasks for various emergency personnel and a communications network to coordinate all off-site emergency response actions.

—Early warning and clear instructions to the population-at-risk in the event of a serious radiological emergency. The utility will be required to put local governments on alert before any release of radiation is expected to occur and will have to provide a system, sirens, etc., by which residents can be warned to prepare for protective action, evacuation or shelter, within 15 minutes of notification by the facility operator that a potential emergency situation exists.

—Continued assessment of actual or potential consequences both onsite and offsite. The

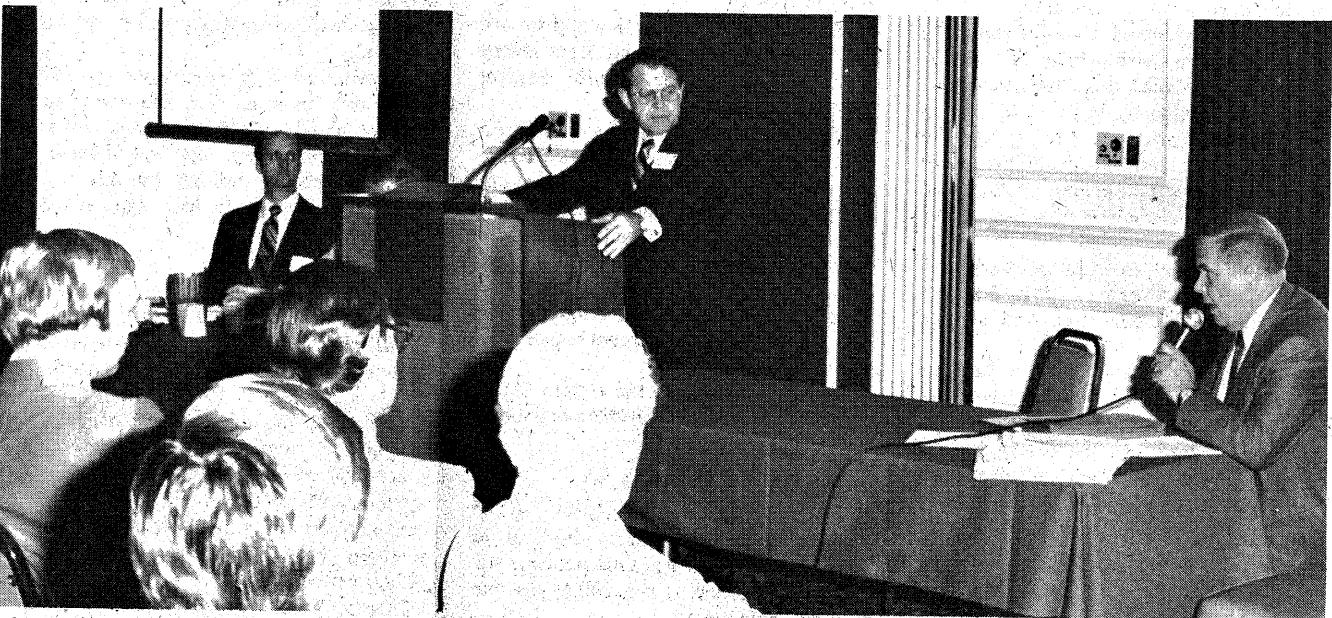
utility must provide complete and accurate on and off site monitoring of radioactivity. The state plan must have a center set up to receive radiological data.

—Effective implementation of emergency measures. The utility must have written agreements from all federal, state, and local support agencies to provide that the plans are properly implemented in a coordinated effort. The state must provide projected dose levels based on utility information, and evacuation routes associated with the plume exposure pathway.

—Continued maintenance of an adequate state of emergency preparedness. This will

include periodic drills of all plans, training of personnel in emergency procedures, and periodic review and updating of the emergency response plans of all involved.

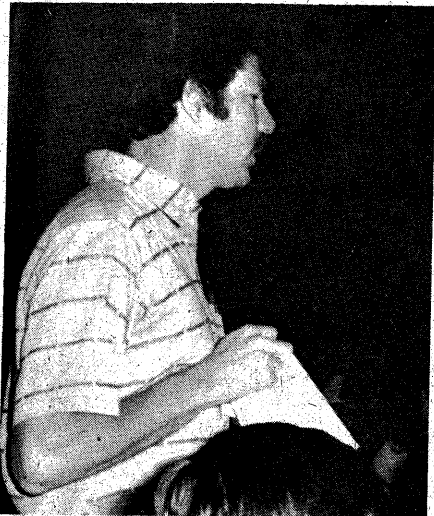
The main gripe heard from the utilities was that the requirement of concurred state plans lets the states decide whether or not they want a nuclear power plant in their state. Jim Miller, assistant manager for site safeguards, who chaired the meeting responded: "It looks like that's the way it's going to pass. It will be a condition, then." He added that there has been a positive response from the states concerning the development of emergency response plans.



## Tell new preparedness requirements

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission yesterday explained to power utilities new emergency preparedness regulations it is instituting for nuclear power plants. Making the presentation were (left to right) Jack Roe, a review team leader; Frank Bigurd, of the staff, and Harold Collins, NRC state planner. The NRC is in the process of

# Nuclear accident plans to include new siting formula



## Makes statement

Dick Hansis of the geography department of Valparaiso university made a statement yesterday at Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearings in Glen Ellen yesterday. (Tribune photo)

By COLLINE E. CANRIGHT

The concept of the Low Population Zone, the formula which is used to determine how far from a population center a nuclear reactor may be located, is being scrapped in favor of 10 mile Emergency Planning Zones it was learned at a Region III meeting of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission at the Holiday Inn in Glen Ellyn, IL.

This new zone regulation would put NIPSCO's Bailly Nuclear I in an area that would have to have an evacuation plan for approximately 300,000 persons, according to Richard Hansis, geographer at Valparaiso University. This figure would not include visitors to the Indiana Dunes State Park and National Lakeshore.

Using the LPZ calculation, the evacuation plan would only include the area of the 2.1 mile LPZ for Bailly.

The zone regulation change is part of an overall evaluation of nuclear facility emergency planning being conducted by the NRC.

The commission has found severe deficiencies in emergency plans of commercial power reactors and is re-reviewing

existing emergency plans, on the basis of new requirements drafted from lessons learned at the Three Mile Island accident, and from suggestions received from a House Subcommittee study on emergency planning at nuclear power plants.

Utilities with operating plants will have their plans reviewed during the next year, with priority given to utilities with plants located in high density population areas, and will have to revise them to meet the new guidelines or face closure of their facilities.

The main guideline that will be changed is the old formula used for the suitability of a site for a nuclear reactor; the LPZ will be scrapped in favor of 10 mile Emergency Planning Zones. The zones will be based on the particular site's radiation plume zone which is based on weather conditions. And, if the 10 mile limit is near or through the boundary of a city, that city will be included in the zone. These zones were recommended in an EPA/NRC study on reactor safety.

The fault with the LPZ was that the zones were based in part on the number of safety features a reactor possessed. The thinking

has been that by increasing the number of safety devices, the size of the LPZ would be decreased. This assumes that all safety features will work as designed, a point that was proven false at the Three Mile Island accident.

Harold Collins, from the NRR, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, stated that "The probabilities of an accident have been knocked into a cocked hat," and compared the accident at Three Mile Island to a "mild heart attack that woke us up. It behooves all of us involved to learn from this experience because we may not get another chance to improve matters."

He continued, saying "the LPZ, as far as emergency planning goes, is totally destroyed by the people who think about emergency planning."

The 10 mile emergency planning zones were defended on the basis that a minority of accidents (35%) would require action outside 10 miles and that these zones take into account class nine accidents, accidents in which engineered safety features fail to perform as designed. Many experts consider the Three Mile Island accident a Class nine accident.

The new guidelines, among other things, will require the establishment of an Emergency Operations Center for Federal, State and Local officials. The center must provide communications to the plant and have data of the events going on in the control room available as they happen. The purpose of this room would be to get people out of the control room so the operator is not interfered with during an accident, and so on and off site response could be coordinated with up to the minute information.

Also, utilities will have to improve off site monitoring of radiation. Included in this proposal would be special monitoring of farmland within a 50 mile radius for traces of radioactive-iodine in the food chain.

Utilities will also be responsible to see that their emergency plans work by conducting test exercises every year with a joint test of federal, state and local plans every five years.

These requirements will have to be implemented before an operating license can be obtained for new plants, by 1981 for plants in high density population areas, and within five years for all operating plants.