

# NRC Investigating Safety Violation At CP&L Plant

Carolina Power & Light officials met Friday with representatives of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to discuss a possible violation in safety regulations at CP&L's Brunswick Nuclear Plant near Southport that could have resulted in the release of radioactive gases into the atmosphere in the event of an accident.

The talks follow an investigation of the problem by the NRC. The commission has 30 days in which to take action following its investigation. If it proposes a fine, it would be the third since July and the second since Jan. 1 involving the plant.

According to the NRC, ventilation dampers in the roof of the secondary containment building may not have worked properly during a refueling of a reactor the week of Dec. 12. The malfunction, which was found and reported by CP&L employees, would keep the dampers from closing. In the unlikely event a container of reactor fuel were dropped and radioactive gases were released into the building, the dampers are supposed to shut automatically.

Meanwhile, CP&L has until late February to decide whether it will protest a \$75,000 fine proposed this month by the NRC for alleged violation of safety requirements at the Brunswick Plant.

CP&L Spokesman Elizabeth Bean said the utility has not decided whether to protest any portion or all of the fine, which is the second proposed by the NRC in six months at the plant.

This latest fine was proposed as a result of two instances between November 1987 and August 1988 where the utility failed to promptly identify and act to correct hardware and/or equipment deficiencies.

One incident involved failure of bolts in motor control centers which distribute electrical power to safety-related motors in the plant. Another involved an improper setting of a steam line flow instrument used in the safety-related core cooling system.

Both problems had been cited in the NRC's annual evaluation report on the plant issued last November.

Together the two problems are categorized by the NRC as "moderately serious," according to a

news release from the agency's Atlanta regional office, "because they reflect the lack of the necessary aggressiveness to ensure that such issues are promptly addressed and resolved as well as a lack of effective communication between various levels of the Carolina Power & Light staff at Brunswick."

The NRC said the typical fine for violations of this severity is \$50,000. However it increased the proposed fine by 50 percent because, it said, "of CP&L's history of poor performance in regard to taking prompt and effective action to correct problems." Delays in repairing equipment were cited also in the annual report.

Such problems should be less likely to occur in the future. Russ Starkey, Brunswick Nuclear Project manager, said CP&L has since implemented programs "to perform more aggressive and timely root cause analysis of equipment problems when they occur."

The bolt failures were first discovered in November 1986 and were repaired. However, the causes of the failure were not discovered until early last year. As a result, said the NRC, safety-related equipment might not have operated properly had there been an earthquake.

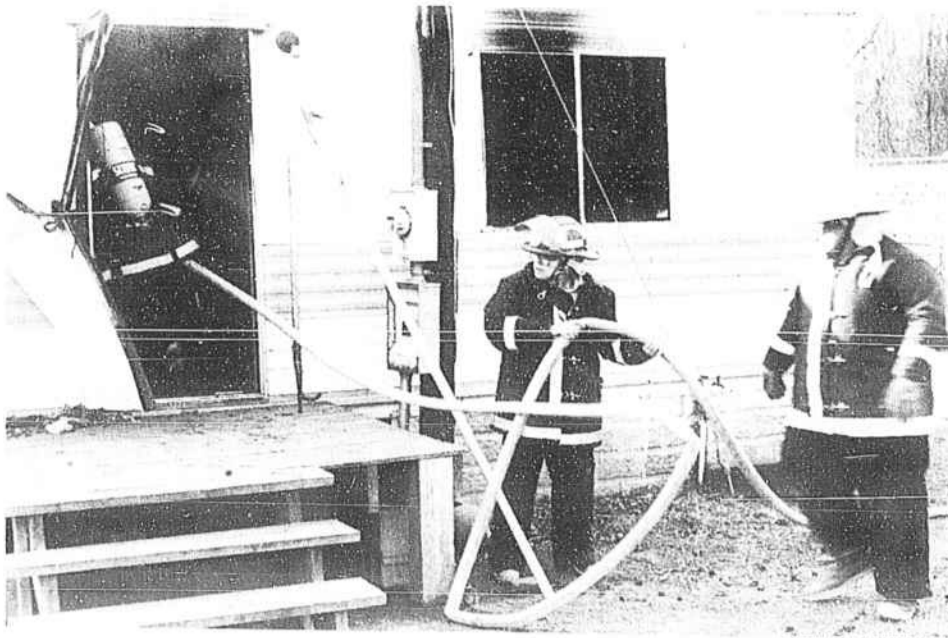
As for the instrument setting, staff suspected as early as November 1987 that the flow to a turbine in the emergency core cooling system was set incorrectly. The problem was not confirmed and corrected until September 1988. If the steam line had broken, the high-pressure coolant injection component of the emergency core cooling system might not have worked properly.

Both the NRC and CP&L agreed that the probably of either accident was highly unlikely and that the public's safety was not in danger.

In July 1988 CP&L was fined for three incidents that occurred between March and May of that year and involved operator errors.

In that case, the \$50,000 fine was increased by 50 percent because of "a lack of attention to detail on the part of the operations staff."

CP&L paid the \$50,000. It protested the additional \$25,000, but paid it after the appeal was denied in October.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

## Mobile Home Destroyed

Fire destroyed this singlewide mobile home in Ash Monday afternoon despite the efforts of about a dozen firefighters from two area departments. Volunteers from Waccamaw and Grissetown-Longwood VFDs and at least one firefighter from Shallotte VFD responded to the 2:30 p.m. blaze on Project Road. First

Captain Tim Simmons of Waccamaw VFD said the structure was fully engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived on the scene and that nobody was home at the time of the blaze. He said Bobby Simmons owned the home. The cause of the fire was unknown at that time.

## Weekend Blaze Destroys Home

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Approximately 35 firefighters with trucks from the Calabash, Grissetown-Longwood, Sunset Beach, Waccamaw, Ocean Isle Beach and Shallotte VFDs responded to the fire call, Logan said. Personnel were on the scene for more than four hours.

Two fire personnel suffered minor injuries while fighting the blaze, Prince said. One woman sprained her arm, while a man got debris in his eye.

Logan said Sunday the cause of the blaze was still undetermined, although it possibly started from an

electrical short in a garage door opener. Logan and Prince handled the investigation. Law enforcement agencies were not called in, since arson was not suspected, the fire marshal said.

According to Prince, Mrs. Pierce reported the fire after she and her husband smelled smoke coming from the garage. When Pierce opened a door that connected the kitchen and garage, flames shot into the house and singed his eyebrows and hair. He was not seriously hurt.

Prince said all the couple were able to save before escaping the house were two shotguns and two pictures

of their daughter, Kimberly, who was killed in a fiery car wreck on N.C. 211 north of Supply in August 1987.

The fire apparently started sometime after their other daughter, Amanda, left for work Saturday around 8:30 a.m., Logan said. He speculated that the garage door opener possibly shorted out after Miss Pierce raised the door to leave in her car. She did not see or smell anything burning at that time, Logan added.

Prince said the Pierce family was able to stay with relatives who also live in the Calabash area.

## Shellfish Ban Lifted

(Continued From Page 1-A)

John Parker, major permits coordinator with the state Division of Coastal Management, said last week there has been no action on the application, which was submitted last April.

"It's solemn as a tomb on this end," he commented, adding that the state is still waiting for corporation officials to revise their plans.

Last spring, Channel Side Corporation applied for a major CAMA permit for construction of a 50-slip marina about 500 feet upstream of Galloway Flats, one of the most productive shellfish beds in the county.

Since then, however, strong concerns voiced by local oyster and clam harvesters have resulted in corpora-

tion officials announcing possible revisions which they believe could help reduce the chances of river pollution.

Mason Anderson, a principal of Channel Side, said last week a revised proposal for the marina would be completed and sent off to the state within the next few weeks. He refused to discuss the proposal in detail, but said it will address the concerns of local shellfishermen.

He added that corporation officials do not feel original plans for the marina were insensitive to the needs of shellfish harvesters. "We are very interested, probably as much or more than anyone else, in water quality."

## No Surprises In Forecast

Seasonable weather conditions are expected over the next several days in the Shallotte area, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

Temperatures through the weekend should range from the mid 30s at night to the mid 50s during the day, Canady said. The area also can expect normal rainfall at about one-half inch.

For the period of Jan. 10 through 16, the daily average temperature was 54 degrees, which Canady said

was about nine degrees above normal.

The average daily high temperature was 62 degrees, and the average daily low temperature was 45 degrees.

The maximum high temperature during the period was 66 degrees, occurring on Jan. 12. The minimum low temperature was 31 degrees, occurring on Jan. 14.

Canady measured .48 of an inch of rainfall during the seven-day period.

## Traffic Report

(Continued From Page 1-A)

Brunswick Hospital near Supply. Trooper D.B. Harvell charged Johnson with driving while impaired. Damage to the car was estimated at \$2,000.

Another Supply man was injured in a single-vehicle wreck that occurred last Thursday at 2:50 a.m., 5.1 miles north of Shallotte at the intersection of U.S. 17 and Sellars Road.

Ms. Oakley said James Monroe Lewis, 46, attempted to turn right on to U.S. 17 by pulling into the left lane of Sellars Road. The truck ran off the left shoulder of the road and overturned onto its side.

Lewis also suffered non-incapacitating injuries, but apparently did not require hospital treatment, Ms. Oakley said.

Trooper D.A. Lewis charged the driver with exceeding a safe speed. Damage to the rig was estimated at \$18,000.

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# Property Tops \$4 Billion

(Continued From Page 1-A)

Plant, replaced Dupont as the second-largest taxpayer. Also, Cogentrix bumped the local development firm, Sunset Beach & Twin Lakes Inc., from the list.

Of the nine taxpayers who remain on the list from 1987, only three—CP&L, Bald Head Island and BEMC—increased in valuation, while the other six decreased.

Du Pont showed the largest drop, falling from a valuation of \$242 million in 1987 to \$213 million in 1988. As a result, the company paid \$61,591.17 less in taxes last year.

Also, Pfizer fell \$11.9 million in value and paid almost \$20,000 less in taxes. International Paper's valuation decreased by \$6.5 million, reflecting a \$23,400 tax cut. Williamson owned \$4.5 million less property and paid about \$8,500 less in taxes.

However, the other two taxpayers whose valuations decreased actually paid higher tax bills in 1988, due to the county's four-cent rate hike. NCEMPA's valuation dropped by \$88,000, but the company paid about \$180,400 more in taxes. Federal Paper's valuation fell by \$4,130, but its tax bill increased by about \$9,840.

Bald Head Island's value increased about \$1.5 million, raising its taxes by about \$27,600. Also, the BEMC valuation rose by about \$6 million, accounting for a \$40,600 tax increase.

Cogentrix—the newcomer to the Top 10 list—is a co-generation plant near Southport. The plant, which went into operation last year, sells processed steam to Pfizer and uses surplus steam to make electricity for sale to CP&L.

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## Schools In Line For Windfall

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In addition to the costs, the bakeries have agreed to establish and maintain plans to ensure compliance with antitrust laws. The companies' performance will be monitored by the Attorney General's office for the next five years.

Once the penalties are paid, there are no prohibitions against the schools continuing to do business with the bakeries involved.

### Bids Always Lowest

According to Wilbur, Brunswick County Schools only had deliveries from "Merita"—American Bakeries, for a year before the Fayetteville bakery closed.

After that, "even though the bakeries came in with quotations, Fox's (Holsum Bakeries) always came in the lowest," said Wilbur, when the unit price bids were opened with the suppliers and several witnesses present. "I'd open them and then award it to the low bidder. It was the same quality of bread for the most part."

Franklin Bakeries for the most part had declined to bid, he said, saying the system was too far from the bakery. Then it began bidding,

though its quotes were always high.

This year, however, Franklin had the low bid, and got the county's business.

During the 1982-83 year the companies were unable to agree to fix bids, according to James C. Gulick, a deputy attorney general for consumer protection services. Prices charged that year were used to determine fair market value in determining losses incurred by the rigging of bids in other years.

According to Simmons the bakeries "switched off," taking turns in submitting low bids for contracts and "dividing" territories. They would agree in advance on what the price was, setting it artificially high.

In the settlement, Fox's Holsum Bakery agreed to pay \$381,412; American Bakeries, \$338,311; Franklin's and its subsidiary, Dainty Maid, \$504,644.

"I think we've gotten the bakeries' attention and I wouldn't predict any more problems," said Simmons.

In a prepared statement, Attorney General Lacy Thornburg called it "reprehensible" of the bakeries "to cheat the public school systems."

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Tennis is another good example. This is a fast-moving game in which good vision is needed so you can be right on top of your opponent's moves as well as have a clear view of the ball, net, and court lines. No matter what the sport, you need a high degree of dynamic visual acuity. This is the ability to see sharply and clearly while an object or player is in motion.

If you have a vision problem, however, such as nearsightedness or farsightedness or some other visual defect that needs correcting, you can't play at your best because you're not seeing at your best.

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