

FCC Warns County Firemen To Stop Misuse Of Radios

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick County firefighters were ordered Monday to cut out the small talk on their two-way radios by Brunswick County Fire Marshal Cecil Logan.

The crackdown followed a warning from the Federal Communications Commission that further "illegal usage of the fire channels" would result in a 30-day suspension of the county's license to operate radios on the fire frequency.

"We're going to put a stop to it," said Logan, "because we can't afford to lose our county fire frequency for 30 days."

The FCC notified Logan Monday morning that the county fire bands will be monitored for 90 days as a result of a complaint called in to the Washington, D.C., office last week. FCC officials refused to identify who filed the complaint, said Logan.

"He said this was a friendly complaint, but that the next time it would not be," Logan said.

Logan estimates that of the county's approximately 800 volunteer firemen approximately 400 have either mobile or hand-held radios that

operate on the county's three fire band channels.

The complainant told FCC officials that local firemen were using the radios to have private conversations.

During the 90-day monitoring period, Logan has asked that only fire department officers and equipment operators use the radios except during fire emergencies.

"I've warned them before. It's been misused, and it's finally caught up with us," said Logan. "What people don't understand is that there's no such thing as a private channel."

County fire personnel once used citizens band radios until those airwaves became too crowded. South Carolina fire departments restrict the use of fire band channels to just the chief and assistant chief, Logan said.

"I'd hate to have to do that," he added. "A lot of firefighters have a lot of money invested in their equipment."

FCC officials also did not mention a particular fire department or county location where the complaint originated.

"I can't really say it's any one department more than the other," said Logan.

"This is not the first time it's been mentioned," he added. "But this time it's got to sink in good and hard."



LOGAN

Brunswick Reactors Make List Of 'Nuclear Lemons'

Both reactors at Carolina Power & Light Co.'s Brunswick Nuclear Plant made the top 10 of a list of 20 nuclear plants rated as the "nation's worst" by an anti-nuclear consumer organization.

However, CP&L disagrees with the conclusions drawn by the report by Public Citizen, a Washington-based advocacy group founded by Ralph Nader. Release of the report, dubbed "Nuclear Lemons," was timed to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Soviet Union last Friday.

CP&L's Brunswick Unit 2 is ranked first and Unit 1 eighth on the list of 20 commercial reactors the Critical Mass Energy Project said should be shut down of the 111 reactors nationwide. A CP&L unit at the Robinson plant in Hartsville, S.C., ranked 17th, while a reactor at Duke Power Co.'s McGuire plant near Charlotte ranked 14th.

CP&L said the report draws invalid conclusions from the statistics gathered, which include incidents reported by plants to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The units are evaluated in 14 categories related to safety, waste and economy that cover various time periods from 1987 through 1990, with an emphasis on 1989 and 1990. All of the factors were weighted identically, a procedure the utility questioned.

"The statistics in these categories DO NOT necessarily correlate with safety of plant operations," a CP&L corporate communications "infobulletin" noted. "Ralph Nader's group has clearly attempted to imply that performance in these categories directly relates to plant safety and there incorrectly judges the nuclear units as 'worst reactors' from a safety perspective."

Not all incidents reported to the NRC directly relate to plant safety.

CP&L spokesman Elizabeth Bean said that the Southport plant has had no reported incidents in the

most serious violation category, safety system failures. Other reporting categories may or may not be safety-related, depending on the nature of the violation.

One reactor at the Brunswick plant was ranked first for frequency of emergency safety or power systems activated. Most of those related to automatic shutdowns or "scrams" of the reactor. While several scrams were caused by operator error, none have involved safety emergencies, according to Bean.

In the report the Brunswick plant is ranked third in the amount of low-level radioactive waste shipped.

In its corporate bulletin CP&L said that a "major contributor" to rankings in several categories has been extensive plant modifications completed during various outages. The plant said the modifications were made to enhance plant safety and efficiency in the long term.

Pipes and other materials replaced during the modifications had to be disposed of as radioactive waste because they carried low levels of radiation.

During 1990, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission fined CP&L \$137,500 for violations. These included the shutdown of both reactors last May after more than 20 operators failed required tests, mainly involving new routines on a simulator. The plant reactivated the two units about two weeks later, after some operators completed retraining and retested satisfactorily.

While the citizens' group is advocating shutdown of the reactors listed, the NRC has said it believes that nuclear power plants are safer than in the past because they are under increased scrutiny.

The Brunswick units operate at about the industry average in performance and slightly better than the industry average in terms of cost, according to CP&L's 1990 annual report.

Garlic's Serious Side: More Than A Condiment

BY JOY ASCHENBACH

National Geographic News Service
Garlic, once believed to fend off ancient demons, may someday ward off modern killer diseases.

"We're trying to develop new foods that will help prevent cells from becoming cancerous," says Herbert Pierson, who heads the National Cancer Institute's year-old "designer foods" program.

Garlic, part of the lily family along with onions and chives, is "a good candidate to be first" to be proved successful, Pierson says. "Garlic is the one we're going after. It is consumed all over the world, and already has a large data base of results in animals. None of the other foods comes close."

Research is centered on garlic, linseed, licorice root, citrus fruit, and members of the parsley family.

In designing cancer-preventive foods, a program still in its infancy, scientists are looking at synergistic effects, combining certain compounds for greater efficacy. Food technologists, for example, "would formulate a food and load it with the right garlic combination," Pierson explains.

"Chopping, steaming, food-processing does miraculous things to garlic," he tells National Geographic.

"Undisturbed, the garlic bulb has limited medicinally active compounds," says Eric Block of the State University of New York at Albany, who is an authority on garlic's chemistry. "Cutting triggers the formation of a cascade of compounds that are quite reactive and participate in a complex sequence of chemical reactions. Ultimately an amazing collection of chemical compounds is produced."

Garlic unleashes at least 100 sulfur-containing compounds. Garlic's sulfur compounds are linked to its medicinal uses. Block is analyzing the effectiveness of a compound that he and his colleagues call "ajoene" in preventing blood from clotting.

Studies in Italy and northeastern China showed that the risk of stomach cancer among people declined as their consumption of garlic, onions, and scallions increased, reports William J. Blot of the cancer institute.

Garlic may also inhibit breast cancer, says John Milner of Pennsylvania State University. Substantial amounts of aged garlic-extract powder were fed to laboratory rats that had been treated with a cancer-causing chemical.

The garlic significantly delayed the onset of mammary tumors. "In some studies, we observed a 70 per-



PHOTO BY BRUCE DALE © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

AFFECTIONATELY CALLED the "stinking rose," garlic is taken seriously today by scientist worldwide, who are studying its potential for reducing the risk of heart disease and preventing cells from becoming cancerous. Once cut, garlic produces sulfur-containing compounds, which are liked to its medicinal uses.

cent reduction in the number of tumors," Milner says. "This marked reduction places a whole new emphasis on the importance of this condiment in our diet."

Besides its potential for cancer prevention, garlic may help lower the risk of heart disease, protect cells against radiation, pollution, and aging, and stimulate the immune function, says Robert I-San Lin, who organized the "First World Congress on the Health Significance of Garlic and Garlic Constituents," in Washington last August.

Fifty scientists from 15 countries compared garlic-research results. Significant studies are being conducted in China, Japan, India, and Germany as well as the United States. The Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans are among the largest consumers of garlic in the world. Americans use more than 250 million pounds a year, most of it California grown.

In a study in India, scientists reported that the death rate was substantially reduced among 222 heart patients who drank daily doses of garlic juice in milk.

But Lin cautions people not to use any form of garlic until it is proved safe and effective, and to consult health professionals. Excessive amounts of raw garlic can cause anemia and inflammation of the digestive tract.

A clove or two of cooked garlic a day can't hurt and may help, Lin says. "I eat pickled garlic as a snack. It's crunchy and tasty, like a roasted almond or peanut. I average a clove a day." In Germany, garlic pills are popular.

Pills and pickled garlic normally do not produce fresh-garlic breath. Although garlic is called the "stinking rose," it gives off little or no odor until cut or crushed. And its odor is not critical to its health benefits.

Garlic-and-health research has intensified worldwide in the past five years, but garlic has been used medicinally for at least 4,000 years. Garlic is mentioned 22 times in the Egyptian Codex Ebers, a medical papyrus dating to about 1500 B.C. It lists garlic as an effective remedy for a variety of ailments such as heart problems, headaches, bites, worms, and tumors.

During the ancient Olympic games in Greece, athletes were said to swallow garlic as a stimulant. The Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder cited 61 therapeutic uses for garlic. Mohammed, founder of the Islamic religion, recommended it for stings and bites.

Traditional herbal doctors in China prescribed, for numerous ailments, garlic cloves aged in vinegar for two to three years.

Although garlic has many mar-

velous attributes, Lin says, it is a myth that garlic makes skin beautiful and bodies well-proportioned.

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