

March 13, 2000

Mr. Alan Weiss
c/o Photography
#1 Station Plaza
Ossining, NY 10562

Dear Mr. Weiss:

I am responding to the question that you asked of Dr. Brian Sheron of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) during the public meeting at Indian Point Unit 2 on March 1, 2000. You stated that there is a geological fault in the area of the Indian Point site and you were concerned about seismic activity in the vicinity of the plant.

There are a series of faults passing through the Indian Point area and they are collectively known as the Ramapo Fault System. Concerns about building a nuclear power plant in the Indian Point area have been the subject of extensive geological studies. Subsequent to the construction of the Indian Point plants an NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) spent several months examining public concerns about seismic activity in the Indian Point area. The geological studies and the findings of the ASLB concluded that the faults in the Indian Point area are inactive and that they have not moved in the last 2 million years.

Although we do not expect any significant seismic activity in the Indian Point area, both operating Indian Point plants are designed for what we call a "safe-shutdown earthquake." A safe-shutdown earthquake is an earthquake based on an evaluation of the maximum potential earthquake in the geological region. The plants are designed so that during a safe-shutdown earthquake the reactor coolant pressure boundary will remain intact and the equipment needed to bring the reactor to a safe-shutdown condition will remain operable.

Because the Ramapo fault system is inactive, because the plants are built on solid bedrock, and because the plants are designed for a safe-shutdown earthquake, we believe that the risk to public health and safety from the plant due to a probable earthquake in the area is extremely small. I hope that I have addressed your concerns.

Thank you for participating in our public meeting and for bringing your concerns to our attention. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 415-1421.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jefferey Harold, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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