

February 19, 1957

Mr. Thomas Manouse
Department of Health
State Office Building
Columbus 25, Ohio

Dear Sir:

Our local union is very deeply concerned by the health program at the Good-year Atomic Corporation Plant at Pike County, Ohio.

Friday, February 15, 1957, one of our members died of leukemia, a disease of which we have very little knowledge. We have no way of telling whether working conditions contributed to his death or not. We have one member in the Dayton, Ohio, Veterans' Hospital with lung cancer who may die at any moment. We have a member at Mount Logan State Hospital with a very, very hopeless case of tuberculosis. (His X-ray pictures were completely clear only a few months before he was said to have advanced TB.) A fellow employee, in the Plant Protection Department is now lying in the Huntington, W. Virginia, Veterans' Hospital also with lung cancer and is not given a chance. These are the worst cases; we have many other less severe cases which are not normal.

All of these people have at least one thing in common besides working here at the Atomic Plant; GAT refuses to accept any responsibility for the plight for each and every one. Is it any wonder employees are becoming frightened and discouraged and quitting the plant? We think not!

We beg of you to use any enforcement of the State of Ohio Department of Health to have a complete investigation of the Portsmouth Area Atomic Plant. We earnestly urge your Department to look into the radioactivity and the protective measures against chemicals such as fluorine, chlorine, uranium hexafluoride and many others which we handle every day. This request comes as a last resort to get something done down here!

For more than two years we have struggled through grievances, arbitration, conferences and even a plant-wide "wildcat" strike to get the management to change their policy of no concern for people working in these conditions but all to no avail. We will be deeply indebted to you if you can help.

Sincerely,

C. A. Romine, President
Local No. 10-689

CC: John R. Roosey,
Ohio OIC Counsel
E.D. Swisher,

E. W. Donner,
GAT
W. Vanover,

C. Martin,
District Director, CCAW

Vice President, CCAW International Representative, CCAW

MA
PORTSMOUTH ENERGY SYSTEMS, INC.

POST OFFICE BOX 628
PIKETON, OHIO 45651
March 5, 1993
POEF-160-93-144

Mr. Eugene W. Gillespie, Site Manager
Portsmouth Site Office
Department of Energy
Post Office Box 700
Piketon, Ohio 45661

Dear Gene:

Special Air Sample Monitoring Program in the X-326

The Health Physics (HP) Department reviews all bioassay and air data quarterly to determine if upward trends are occurring. This is done as a reasonable measure to ensure the health and safety of all employees.

The historic Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PORTS) bioassay action levels are as follows:

	Routine	Special
Flag	= 8.0 dpm/100 ml	800 dpm/100 ml
Investigate	= 16.0 dpm/100 ml	1200 dpm/100 ml
Restriction	= 80.0 dpm/100 ml	2000 dpm/100 ml

The HP Department, in an effort to upgrade the Internal Dosimetry Program, had instituted some minor changes in late 1991. The first was to change the counting protocol of the bioassay samples to lower the effective detection limit to approximately 2.0 dpm/100 ml. The second change was to start recalling individuals for a resample at 4.0 dpm/100 ml in an effort to confirm if an intake had occurred. This effectively changed the PORTS Bioassay Program from a program dependent on "intake detection" to a program of "intake assessment." In other words, we now know and assess much lower exposures.

When reviewing the second quarter Calendar Year (CY) 1992 bioassay data, it was noticed that there was an apparent increase in the number of positive (detectable) samples being submitted. There was also a dramatic increase in the number of people being recalled for confirmatory samples.

The first indication was an increase in the number of positive samples submitted in June 1992. It is assumed that the reason for the increase was the return of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Worker (OCAW) personnel. Since the July bioassay data did not indicate any further increase, nothing was done at the time. Also during this time frame, the air card data did not indicate any major increases of airborne radioactivity concentrations.

In November, while reviewing the third quarter bioassay and air-card data, it was noticed that there was another increase in the number of positive bioassay samples. Individuals assigned to the X-326 Building were submitting the majority of the positive bioassay samples, while at the same time a minor increase in the airborne radioactivity concentration in the X-326 was noted. Most of the levels detected were extremely low and were less than the historic flag level of 8.0 dpm/100 ml.

This was brought to the attention of the PORTS Operations management and corrective actions began in early December. HP and X-326 Operations personnel began an aggressive program to determine where the problem was occurring. This called for HP to temporarily assign one of the Contamination Control technicians to an air sampling and special survey program while Operations made inspections to determine if unidentified systems leaks were occurring. (A copy of the letter POEF-160-92-634 outlining HP's actions and recommendations is attached.)

After approximately a week, it was apparent that the airborne radioactivity concentrations were varying with the atmospheric pressure. Since there have been major modifications in X-326 in conjunction with the HEU suspension project, HP's first concern was that the modifications were the cause. When this information was brought to the attention of Operations personnel, a concerted effort to bring all of the "cells" in the X-326 to a slight negative to atmospheric pressure was undertaken.

In HP's letter POEF-160-93-011 (attached), you will find a summary of our findings. The attached graph shows the weekly airborne concentration averages along with the daily concentrations. As you will notice, there is a decrease in the weekly average airborne concentration after week one. In HP's letter POEF-160-93-098, the attached graph shows the weekly and monthly averages during this temporary air sampling strategy. The decrease of the airborne concentrations to effectively "zero" or background levels, along with the reduction in the number of recall bioassay samples (5.27% in December to 1.04% in January and 1.087% for the first three weeks of February), has given us enough data to suspend the special air sampling regimen in X-326.

The special air sampling was performed by strategically placing Breathing Zone (BZ) pumps in X-326 and assigning the HP technicians BZ pumps while carrying out their normal duties. The BZ pumps are utilized by both Industrial Hygiene and HP to assess job-related hazards. The special air sampling program was using up ten extra pumps a day, along with removing the HP technician from his regularly assigned duties. Since the suspension of the special X-326 coverage, there are other jobs on plant site that are requiring

Mr. Eugene W. Gillespie

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special coverage. The alumina trap batching currently occurring in X-744G, along with the requests for special gaseous technetium sampling requested by X-326 management, are two such projects we are currently concerned with.

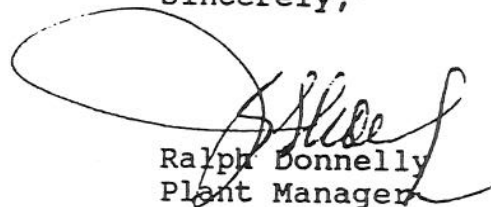
The HP Department has several additional portable air sampling stations on order to increase the air monitoring capabilities in X-326 and other buildings at PORTS. This equipment is scheduled to be on site in mid March. When this equipment is operational and personnel trained in its use, the number of air sample locations will be effectively doubled on plantsite.

In an effort to ensure management is kept aware of the potential internal dosimetry concerns, HP began submitting to division managers a monthly internal dosimetry report. (Attached are copies of the December 1992 and the January 1993 letters with attached summary sheets.) This report is currently set up to identify the individuals who have been recalled for bioassay sampling for radioactive contaminants, along with a millirem dose approximation.

In closing, we consider the special sampling program a success. A problem was discovered (while the levels were still low), corrective actions implemented, and the problem resolved.

Please contact Charley Slater at extension 5975 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Ralph Donnelly
Plant Manager

RGD:JFThompson:rf

Attachments (5)

cc/att: Bill Bennett, DOE-HQ
Wendy Fields, 702SIA
Mark Granus/Charley Slater
Jay Hummer, 701SCA
Records Management/PMO - RC
Steve Polston, PGDP
Bill Strunk
File-Health Physics