

Safety checks reviewed

Nuclear power control deficient

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The federal safety checks on nuclear reactor controls are less stringent than those governing toasters and hair dryers, according to three engineers who quit their jobs to warn of dangers of nuclear power.

The three, who resigned from middle-level management positions at General Electric's nuclear division on Feb. 2 so they could focus atten-

tion on nuclear safety defects, warned today that federal regulations lack any requirement for an independent review of certain nuclear controls.

They made their statement in testimony prepared for the Joint Atomic Energy Committee.

The three former General Electric officials, Dale G. Bridenbaugh, Richard B. Hubbard and Gregory C. Minor, said in their statement, how-

ever, that the ability of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to effectively regulate the nuclear industry is suspect.

"The tremendous cost, schedule and political pressures experienced make unbiased decisions, with true evaluations of the consequences, impossible to achieve," the statement said. "This is the ultimate deficiency of our nuclear program."

After they resigned, the engineers met with William A. Anders, chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other commission officials. The commission said after the meeting that the engineers' complaints were philosophical and dealt with general safety issues that were under consideration by the commission staff.

Bridenbaugh, involved with nuclear power plants since 1958 and a General Electric employee since 1953, spent the past 10 months on a special project evaluating the safety of 25 nuclear power plants.

Hubbard was responsible for developing and implementing plans assuring that products of the com-

pany's nuclear energy control and instrumentation department met federal quality requirements.

Minor was responsible for the design of safety and control systems.

Referring to problems in safety equipment, the engineers said in their congressional statement that Nuclear Regulatory Commission requirements for safety-related equipment are less stringent than codes developed in 1911 to protect the public from boiler explosions.

In addition, they said, the commission does not require an independent third party similar to the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., to evaluate safety-related equipment. Underwriters Laboratories was founded in 1894 to investigate and test electrical appliances.

"The public has a right to know that an electrical appliance, such as a toaster or hair dryer, has more stringent safety checks than the electrical instruments that control a nuclear plant," the statement said.

"This is a clear demonstration of the inadequate attention given by the NRC towards protecting the public safety."

Consumer check

Banks offer special accounts

Consumer Check is a bi-weekly feature of The Battalion. It examines and compares services and products used by A&M students. This week, Bryan and College Station banking services were compared.

For the student who doesn't like to worry about maintaining a minimum daily balance, the special student checking accounts offered by three local banks are cheaper than regular accounts.

The Bank of A&M in College Station and the First Bank & Trust in Bryan charge the student with the special account 10 cents per check. The First National Bank in Bryan charges the student \$2 for a book of 25 checks, or eight cents per check.

The City National Bank in Bryan, the Bank of A&M and the First Bank & Trust offer regular checking accounts in which there is no service charge if a \$300 minimum daily balance is maintained. If the balance drops below \$300, these banks charge a service fee of \$1.25 per month and six cents per check. However, for each \$100 in the minimum daily balance, 25 cents is deducted from the \$1.25 monthly charge.

At the First National Bank there is no service charge if the minimum daily balance is at least \$300. If the balance is at least \$200 there is a \$1 charge. A \$2 fee is charged if the

balance is at least \$100. If the balance falls below \$100 there is a \$3 service charge.

The University National Bank in College Station has no service charge if a \$300 minimum daily balance is maintained. Eight checks a month may be written with no service charge if a \$200 balance is kept. With a \$100 balance four checks a month may be written with no service charge. If the minimum daily balance is not maintained or if more checks are written than are allotted per month, there is a service charge of \$1.25 per month and six cents per check.

Checks for the regular checking account must be ordered, usually in groups of 200. Prices range from \$3 to \$3.50 for 200 checks. The First Bank & Trust however, offers 200 checks for \$2.50.

The First Bank & Trust and the City National Bank are the only banks in this area that will cash a check with proper identification alone. The University National Bank charges 50 cents to cash a check if it is not written on the bank or if the person wishing to cash the check does not have an account there. The First National Bank and the Bank of A&M require that the person have an account with their bank or that the

check be written on their bank's check. The Bank of A&M will accept an ID when cashing a check.

All five banks are open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The drive-in windows at the National Bank, the First Bank & Trust and the First National Bank open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Friday. The drive-in windows at the Bank of A&M open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Friday, and the drive-in windows at the University National Bank open from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The First National Bank is at 120 N. Main. The drive-in windows are located at 24th Street. The drive-in window of the City National Bank is on Texas Ave., and the drive-in window of the First Bank & Trust is at 101 N. Texas Ave. All three banks are in Bryan.

The Bank of A&M is at 4th Ave., and the University National Bank is at 711 University Blvd. both in College Station. The A&M has four drive-in windows next to the bank. The City National Bank has four drive-in windows and one walk-up window adjacent to the bank.

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