

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1405

H. P. 1181

House of Representatives, March 19, 1981

Referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative J. Mitchell of Freeport.

Cosponsors: Representative Michael of Auburn, Representative Michaud of East Millinocket, Representative Fitzgerald of Waterville.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT to Require Immediate Public Notification of Radioactive Releases and Other Safety Related Events at Nuclear Power Plants.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

35 MRSA § 3332, as enacted by PL 1979, c. 225, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§ 3332. Notice to the Commissioner of Human Services

1. **Notice.** The president of any nuclear power generating facility in Maine, or his designee, shall provide the Commissioner of Human Services with notice of the events covered by this section.

2. **Events requiring notice.** This notice shall be required as indicated for the following events:

A. **Scheduled releases of radioactive materials, at least 24 hours before the release is planned to occur;**

B. **Unscheduled releases of radioactive materials, as soon as possible, but no more than 24 hours after the discovery of the release; and**

C. **Breakdowns or malfunctions of any safety related equipment, as soon as**

possible, but no more than 24 hours after the discovery of the breakdown or malfunction.

3. Information required. The notice required by this section shall contain a description of the following:

- A. The total amount of radioactivity released or planned to be released;**
- B. The estimated individual dose that may occur due to the event;**
- C. Weather conditions at the time of the release;**
- D. The area affected or anticipated to be affected by the event;**
- E. The equipment that malfunctioned, or the operator error or other condition that caused the release; and**
- F. The corrective actions taken.**

STATEMENT OF FACT

All nuclear power plants release radioactive material to the environment. These releases are usually small and have had no known health impact on the public. There have been occasions when the releases have been significant enough to cause the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to invoke civil penalties. No such releases have yet occurred in Maine. Federal regulations require the reporting of all radioactive releases with frequencies varying with the type and severity of release. At this time, the Department of Human Services receives similar reports. However, the frequency of the reports is such that long periods of time pass before the public is made aware of release events. This delay in public access to information is unjustified. There are both known and unknown risks associated with radioactive material and the public has a right to the information provided by the bill.

This bill requires prompt reporting of radioactive releases and malfunctions of safety related equipment to the Commissioner of Human Services.