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Radiation precautions

Just in case—here's how to deal with radioactive fallout

The reports from Three Mile Island have been getting better, and the chances of the dreaded "core melt" are getting smaller. However, there is still some chance, however slim, that the plant will release large amounts of radiation. Here is some advice for that event.

First—do not confuse an evacuation order with a core melt or radiation release. Evacuation may be ordered, but if it is, it will almost certainly not be because of a core melt. An evacuation may be ordered, for example, when the nuclear engineers get ready to shut down the reactor, as a precaution. **DO NOT** panic if you hear that an evacuation has been ordered: it won't mean there has been a radiation release.

If there is a core melt, it will be much more serious than anything that has happened so far, and you should act quickly. Whatever happens, though—**DON'T PANIC.** It could kill you. Panic can be more deadly than radiation.

A core melt could release large amounts of radiation, much like the fallout from an atomic bomb. Here are some tips for escaping the radiation. (Note: the following information is not to be taken as a complete guide. Any instructions given by the authorities, in the event of any emergency, should be given precedence over the following. Some of the information is based on Air Force survival manuals, some is derived from other sources. It is not from an authoritative source, so ignore it if the authorities tell you to do something else.)

The first thing to do in the event of a core melt is to seek shelter in your house. Turn on the radio or TV to get instructions.

Close all windows and doors, including storm windows, and turn off air conditioners and furnaces. Close the fireplace damper. These steps will keep dust out of the house. A core melt may release radioactive dust.

The authorities may tell you to leave, or they may tell you to stay. If you are told to leave, remember that even if you are downwind of the reactor, you need only drive faster than the wind to stay ahead of the radioactive cloud. Thus, if the winds are blowing at 15 miles per hour, you'd be safe driving at 20 miles per hour. If people panic and wreck cars all over the road, no one will be able to get away—including the person who wrecks his car.

If you are staying inside, do just that—stay inside. There may be radiation outside in lethal amounts. By staying in, you will keep radioactive dust out of your lungs, off your clothes, and away from you. The walls of the house will provide some shielding. By opening the door, you would not only expose yourself to radiation, but let radioactive dust and/or gases into the house.

Radiation is blocked best by thick walls. It would be better to stay next to a concrete wall than a wooden one. The basement would probably be the best place, because of the thick layer of dirt and concrete or stone between you and the radiation outside.

If you must go outside, keep your exposure as short as possible. The danger will probably decrease as the days go by, due to the decay of the radioactive isotopes. If you don't have a radio to tell you anything else, stay inside all the time for at least a week.

If you must go outside, make sure you take a shower as soon as you come back in. Take off your clothes and put them in a plastic bag; **don't** put them back on, even if you have washed them.

Don't eat any food that has been outside and uncovered. Eating a lettuce leaf from your garden might kill you. Canned foods are the safest. Food previously stored in the refrigerator should also be fairly safe,

because it will have been kept away from the dust. (Electricity may stay on indefinitely after a core melt as there would be no explosion like an A-bomb to knock out power lines.)

It would probably be a good idea to take a broom and sweep the floor of your chosen living area at regular intervals, to help get rid of any radioactive dust which may have filtered into the house. If you damp mop, throw out the water or keep it in another part of the house far away from you. The same would go for the mop itself.

The most important thing in any emergency is not to panic. Keep your head if you want to survive. Follow the instructions of the authorities.

Nuclear power show on TV

Channel 33, WITF-TV, will broadcast a show this Friday evening at 9 p.m. about the hazards of nuclear energy and about the attempts of government

officials to conceal information about the dangers.

The show includes interviews with Paul Jacobs, who warned against the dangers of nuclear energy

and who died of cancer possibly caused by radiation.

"Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang" is the title of the show.

Ten join Hispanic Honor Society

The following students have been elected to membership in the Hispanic Honor Society, Menendez Pidal Chapter, at Donegal High School..:

Karen Barnhart, Theresa Berg, LuAnn Brennehan, Susan Gebhart, Tracee Gotwalt, Beth Keffer, Philip Landis, Timothy Milovich, Cheri Ney, and Barrie Price.

Certificates of membership will be presented at the Annual Foreign Language Banquet on Friday, May 4, 1979.

The Hispanic Honor Society is a national organization of excellent students of Spanish in secondary schools. Membership in the Donegal Chapter is attained by

achieving a 4.0 average during the first seven nine-week marking periods of study of the language. Students are then required to maintain their 4.0 average for the duration of their study of the language at Donegal.

The local chapter sponsor is Glenn E. Hess, Spanish instructor at Donegal.

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