September 1, 2010

Mr. M.E. Reddemann  
Chief Executive Officer  
Energy Northwest  
P.O. Box 968, Mail Drop 1023  
Richland, WA 99352-0968

SUBJECT: MIDCYCLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND INSPECTION PLAN – COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION

Dear Mr. Reddemann:

On August 10, 2010, the NRC staff completed its performance review of the Columbia Generating Station for the first half of the calendar year 2010 assessment cycle. Our technical staff reviewed performance indicators for the most recent quarter and inspection results over the previous 12 months. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility.

This performance review and enclosed inspection plan do not include security information. A separate letter designated and marked as “Official Use Only – Security-Related Information,” will include the security cornerstone review and resultant inspection plan.

Plant performance for the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC’s Action Matrix, based on all inspection findings being classified as having very low safety significance (Green) and all performance indicators indicating performance at a level requiring no additional NRC oversight (Green). Therefore, we plan to conduct reactor oversight process baseline inspections at your facility.

While plant performance for the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response column of the Action Matrix, there was a safety significant performance indicator affecting the first three quarters of the assessment cycle as a result of a White performance indicator for unplanned scrams per 7000 critical hours. A supplemental inspection was conducted in March of 2010 that concluded the root causes of the unplanned reactor scrams were adequately defined, understood, and the corrective actions appropriately addressed the identified causes. NRC staff understands Energy Northwest has undertaken new initiatives and corrective actions to address station performance for which effectiveness can only be completely evaluated when the initiatives and actions have been fully implemented. The NRC will continue to monitor your progress through focused baseline inspections and review of completed corrective actions implemented in accordance with your improvement plan.

The enclosed inspection plan details the inspections, less those related to physical protection, scheduled through December 31, 2011. The inspection plan is provided to allow for the resolution of any scheduling conflicts and personnel availability issues well in advance of
inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature. The inspections in the last 9 months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the end-of-cycle review.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC’s “Rules of Practice,” a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records component of NRC’s document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

If circumstances arise which cause us to change the inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact Wayne Walker at 817-860-8148 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

Anton Vegel, Acting Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket: 50-397
License: NPF-21

Enclosure: Columbia Generating Station Inspection/Activity Plan

cc w/Enclosure
Chairman
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
P.O. Box 43172
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

Douglas W. Coleman
Manager, Regulatory Programs
Energy Northwest
P.O. Box 968, Mail Drop PE20
Richland, WA 99352-0968

Chairman
Benton County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 190
Prosser, WA 99350-0190

Richard Cowley
Washington State Department of Health
111 Israel Road, SE
Tumwater, WA 98504-7827
Energy Northwest

William A. Horin, Esq
Winston and Strawn
1700 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-3817

Lynn Albin
Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 7827
Olympia, WA 98504-7827

Ken Niles
Assistant Director
Nuclear Safety and Energy Siting Division
Oregon Department of Energy
625 Marion Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-3737

Special Hazards Program Manager
Washington Emergency Management Division
127 W. Clark Street
Pasco, WA 99301

Chief, Technological Hazards Branch
FEMA Region X
Federal Regional Center
130 228th Street, SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796
Energy Northwest

Electronic distribution by RIV:
Regional Administrator (Elmo.Collins@nrc.gov)
Deputy Regional Administrator (Chuck.Casto@nrc.gov)
DRP Acting Director (Anton.Vegel@nrc.gov)
DRP Acting Deputy Director (Troy.Pruett@nrc.gov)
DRS Director (Roy.Caniano@nrc.gov)
DRS Acting Deputy Director (Jeff.Clark@nrc.gov)
Senior Resident Inspector (Ronald.Cohen@nrc.gov)
Resident Inspector (Mahdi.Hayes@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRP/A (Wayne.Walker@nrc.gov)
Senior Project Engineer, DRP/A (David.Proulx@nrc.gov)
Project Engineer, DRP/A (Nick.Hernandez@nrc.gov)
Project Engineer, DRP/A (Laura.Micewski@nrc.gov)
Columbia Administrative Assistant (Crystal.Myers@nrc.gov)
Public Affairs Officer (Victor.Dricks@nrc.gov)
Public Affairs Officer (Lara.Uselding@nrc.gov)
Project Manager (Fred.Lyon@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/TSB (Michael.Hay@nrc.gov)
RITS Coordinator (Marisa.Herrera@nrc.gov)
Regional Counsel (Karla.Fuller@nrc.gov)
Congressional Affairs Officer (Jenny.Weil@nrc.gov)
OEMail Resource
ROPreports Resource
Regional State Liaison Officer (Bill.maier@nrc.gov)
Regional Administrator Secretary (lucy.owen@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/Engineering Branch 1 (Thomas.Farnholtz@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/Engineering Branch 2 (Neil.OKeefe@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/Operations Branch (Mark.Haire@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/Plant Support Branch 1 (Michael.Shannon@nrc.gov)
Branch Chief, DRS/Plant Support Branch 2 (Greg.Werner@nrc.gov)
Deputy Assistant for Operations, OEDO (James.Andersen@nrc.gov)
Director, DIRS, NRR (Frederick.Brown@nrc.gov)
Deputy Director, DIRS, NRR (Michael.Cheok@nrc.gov)
Deputy Director, DORL, NRR (Robert.Nelson@nrc.gov)
Director, DORL, NRR (Joseph.Gitter@nrc.gov)
LPL4 Branch Chief, DORL (Michael.Markley@nrc.gov)
OEDO RIV Coordinator (Margie.Kotzalas@nrc.gov)
mortensengk@INPO.org

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