

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION- REGION III

July 6, 2010

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-III-10-010A

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region III staff on this date.

Facility

Palisades Nuclear Plant
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Covert, MI
Docket: 50-255
License: DPR-20

Utility Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: UPDATE - PALISADES FORCED SHUTDOWN FOR GREATER THAN 72 HOURS TO REPLACE LEAKING CONTROL ROD DRIVE SEAL

DESCRIPTION:

On June 24, 2010, the utility shut the plant down using normal shutdown procedures due to a leaking Control Rod Drive (CRD) seal.

The utility had been tracking the leak rate for control rod 22 and noted a rate increase which was indicative of a CRD seal failing. The elevated leakage rate and upward trend prompted the utility to shut down the plant in order to repair the leaking seal.

While limited CRD seal leakage is not unusual for the CRD seal design at Palisades, elevated CRD seal leakage rates and increasing leak-rate trends are indicators of CRD seal degradation. The site has experienced elevated CRD seal leakage rates and increasing leak-rate trends in the past which required similar plant shutdowns.

Control Rod Drive leakage is routed to the containment sump where it is collected and processed. The leakage creates no unmonitored offsite dose impact nor did the CRD leakage impact safety system performance.

During the outage, the utility repaired the CRD seal and also replaced a reactor cooling pump seal that showed signs of degradation. On July 2, 2010, the utility restarted the reactor and then proceeded to put the turbine back online.

The NRC inspectors observed the reactor return to criticality and other restart activities.

Region III received notification of the utility's restart activities by email notification from the resident inspectors on July 2, 2010. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with utility management and is current as of 10:30 a.m. on July 06, 2010.

ADAMS Accession Number ML101870533

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