

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION - REGION III

October 25, 2011

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-III-11-015

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. Some of the information may not yet be fully verified or evaluated by the Region III staff.

Facility

Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant
Northern States Power Co.
Monticello, MN
Docket: 50-263
License: DPR-22

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: UNPLANNED SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS DUE TO A LOSS OF THE AUXILIARY POWER TRANSFORMER

DESCRIPTION:

On October 21, 2011, Monticello experienced a reactor scram following the unexpected loss of the auxiliary power transformer, which supplies offsite power to plant equipment. As designed, electrical power automatically transferred to the backup transformer. During the transfer, there was a momentary loss of power to pumps that provide water to the reactor, resulting in an automatic reactor scram. This scram occurs when reactor water level drops below a certain setpoint, but before an actual safety concern exists. Both emergency diesel generators were available during the event, but were not needed. Currently, the plant is shut down with offsite electrical power available. There was no effect to public health and safety from this event.

There were some unexpected equipment interactions that occurred during the event. The normal cooling water supply to one of the emergency diesel generators did not work properly. However, the licensee was able to provide cooling water to the diesel generator from another source. Additionally, during the fast transfer, one of the non-safety electrical buses failed to energize. These two conditions did not adversely impact the operation of any safety-related equipment and these equipment issues will be evaluated as part of the licensee's investigation.

The NRC resident inspectors observed the reactor shutdown and will evaluate the licensee's repair of the affected equipment.

This preliminary notification is issued for information only. State and local officials have been informed. The site issued a press release on October 21, 2011, describing the event.

The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee, and is current as of 6:30 a.m. (CST), on October 25, 2011.

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CONTACTS: Ken Riemer
630/829-9628
Kenneth.Riemer@nrc.gov

Nirodh Shah
630/829-9821
Nirodh.Shah@nrc.gov