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Region III Office of Public Affairs  
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NRC FINDS PERFORMANCE 'ACCEPTABLE'  
AT MONTICELLO NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN LATEST REVIEW

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has found that safety performance remains acceptable in the NRC's latest plant performance review at the Monticello nuclear power plant, located in Monticello, Minnesota.

The review covers July 18 of last year through January 31.

Geoffrey Grant, NRC Region III Division Director, in a letter to Northern States Power Company, said, "Overall, performance at the Monticello Nuclear Plant was acceptable. Operator performance in response to several plant transients, and during reactor startups and shutdowns and a refueling outage was very good...Maintenance and surveillance testing activities continued to be performed well, with some minor exceptions. Equipment material condition, similar to the previous assessment period, was excellent."

"Engineering personnel provided excellent support to the maintenance staff during maintenance and surveillance test activities, Mr. Grant continued. "The quality and self-assessment processes at Monticello are performing well."

The text of the plant performance review letter is available from the NRC Region III Office of Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr>.

NRC reviews safety performance twice a year at every licensed nuclear power plant in the nation. These reviews give the agency staff an integrated assessment of plant performance and provide a basis for planning inspection activities.

Plant performance reviews are an interim measure NRC is utilizing to monitor nuclear power plant safety. The agency began using it for this purpose after suspending the Systematic Assessment of License Performance (SALP) process until a new assessment program is developed. Previously, SALP reports were issued every 12 to 24 months.

The new reactor oversight and assessment program being developed will provide quarterly performance reports, based on a number of performance indicators and on inspection findings. This program will be tested at eight sites beginning in June and will be extended to all plants next January. A full description of the new program is available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>.

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