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Region III Office of Public Affairs  
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NRC FINDS PERFORMANCE 'ACCEPTABLE'  
AT PRAIRIE ISLAND 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 Prairie Island nuclear power plant, located in Red Wing, Minnesota.

The review covers March 28 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 Prairie Island Nuclear Plant was acceptable...Maintenance and surveillance testing activities were generally conducted in an appropriate manner, but procedure adherence and work control problems persist from the previous assessment period...In the area of engineering, except for degraded control rod drive cables on the Unit 1 reactor head, equipment material condition remained excellent and safety system reliability/availability remained very high...In the area of operations, performance was consistent. Operator performance in response to several reactor transients (including four reactor trips) and during a refueling outage was very good."

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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