

August 6, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-01-027

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

Prairie Island 1
Nuclear Management Co.
Red Wing, Minnesota
Docket No. 50-282

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: ELECTRICAL PANEL FIRE DURING PLANT STARTUP

DESCRIPTION:

At 8:40 p.m. (CDT) on August 3, 2001, a fire occurred in a 4-kilovolt electrical panel while plant operators were transferring the plant's electrical power from the reserve transformer, used during initial startup, to the main transformer for continued power ascension. The plant started up earlier in the day following an outage which began August 1 when an electrical circuit problem caused a bank of control rods to insert unexpectedly into the reactor core.

The Unit 1 reactor tripped from about 20 percent power when the electrical panel fire occurred. The Bus 12 electrical panel supplies power to one reactor coolant pump; the second pump was shut down and reactor heat was removed using natural circulation as called for in plant emergency procedures. The auxiliary feedwater pumps started in order to provide water to the steam generators.

Unit 2 was not affected by the fire and remained in operation at 100 percent power.

The fire was extinguished by the plant fire brigade and the Red Wing MN Fire Department. Two fire brigade members were treated for heat exhaustion at the site, and one was taken to the Red Wing hospital for additional treatment.

The licensee declared an unusual event under its emergency plan. The event classification was terminated at 12:12 a.m. on August 4, 2001, after the fire was extinguished and plant systems were stable and powered from offsite electrical power supplies.

The licensee is investigating the cause of the electrical panel fire and developing its repair procedures.

The NRC resident inspector responded to the plant site when the fire occurred. The resident inspector and the Region III staff are continuing to monitor plant activities.

The States of Minnesota, and Wisconsin and the Prairie Island Indian Community were notified. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

The licensee issued news releases on the fire and unusual event classification.

The licensee reported this event to the NRC Operations Center at 9:56 p.m. CDT on August 3, 2001. This information is current as of 9 a.m. CDT on August 6, 2001.

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