

August 10, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-III-00-019C

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 Management Co.

Covert Michigan

Docket No. 50-255

Licensee Emergency Classification

☐ Notification of Unusual Event

☐ Alert

☐ Site Area Emergency

☐ General Emergency

☒ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: SMALL LEAK IN CONTROL ROD DRIVE HOUSING (THIRD UPDATE)

DESCRIPTION:

On June 20, 2001, the plant was shut down to investigate a primary cooling water leak inside the reactor containment. The licensee found a small leak from an axial crack in the lower portion of the Number 21 control rod drive housing, approximately four feet above the reactor vessel head.

The licensee has now examined the 26 accessible control rod drive housings, out of a total of 45, using radiography, and is preparing to visually examine the interior surfaces of the remaining 19 housings using a high resolution camera.

The radiographs for 21 of the housings have been reviewed, and crack indications have been identified in 18 of them, including the Number 21 housing where the initial leak was found. Crack indications have been identified in both axial and circumferential orientation. Radiography has been completed for five additional housings, and the results are being evaluated.

For the remaining interior housings, which are inaccessible for radiography, the licensee is planning to use a high resolution camera for remote visual examination. To perform the inspection, each control rod drive mechanism will be disconnected from the control rod, which will remain inserted in the reactor core. The mechanism will then be removed from the housing, the interior surfaces cleaned through hydrolasing, and the camera inserted into the housing for the inspection.

The licensee is still reviewing and developing possible repair procedures for the housings where cracking has been found. May require removal of some housings for weld overlay repair.

The first phase of a special NRC inspection of the control rod drive housing cracking has been completed, and the inspectors held an exit meeting August 9, 2001, with the licensee. An inspection report will be issued on the findings through August 9, while the

special inspection continues to monitor the licensee's examination, evaluation, and repair activities.

The State of Michigan will be informed of this updated information. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

This information is current as of 9 a.m. on August 10, 2001.

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