

September 27, 2001

Mr. Jeffrey S. Forbes
Site Vice President
Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant
Nuclear Management Company, LLC
2807 West County Road 75
Monticello, MN 55362-9637

SUBJECT: MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT- COMPLETION OF LICENSING ACTIVITY FOR NRC BULLETIN 96-03, "POTENTIAL PLUGGING OF EMERGENCY CORE COOLING SUCTION STRAINERS BY DEBRIS IN BOILING-WATER REACTORS," DATED MAY 6, 1996 (TAC NO. M96156)

Dear Mr. Forbes:

On May 6, 1996, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin (BL) 96-03, "Potential Plugging of Emergency Core Cooling Suction Strainers by Debris in Boiling-Water Reactors," to all holders of operating licenses or construction permits for boiling-water reactors (BWRs). The NRC issued BL 96-03 to ensure that the emergency core cooling systems (ECCSs) in BWRs can perform their intended safety function to mitigate the effects of a postulated loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA). The BL provided three options for resolving this issue: (1) installation of large capacity passive strainers, (2) installation of self-cleaning strainers, or (3) installation of a backflush system.

In BL 96-03, the NRC staff specifically requested that licensees submit the following reports for each of their facilities:

1. A description of planned actions and mitigative strategies to be used, the schedule for implementation, and proposed technical specifications, if appropriate.
2. A report confirming completion and summarizing actions taken.

In response to BL 96-03, you provided letters dated November 1, 1996, July 29 and August 12, 1997, and May 4, 2000, for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. You stated that you planned to install large-capacity passive strainers which would be designed using the guidance in the Boiling Water Reactor Owners Group's Utility Resolution Guidance (URG) (NEDO-326896, Rev. 0). The NRC staff reviewed the URG and issued a safety evaluation (SE) on August 20, 1998. By letter dated August 30, 2001, you informed the NRC staff that you had completed all actions requested by the BL. These actions included installing large-capacity passive strainers (BL 96-03, Option 1) and evaluating the effects of debris collecting on the strainers and the net positive suction head requirements for the low pressure ECCS pumps.

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The NRC staff has reviewed your response and has determined that the actions taken should minimize the potential for clogging of ECCS suction strainers and ensure the capability of the ECCS to provide long-term cooling following a LOCA as required by 10 CFR 50.46. Because the staff considers your actions responsive to the concerns raised in BL 96-03, BL 96-03 is closed for your facility. Detailed reviews of your strainer design and 10 CFR 50.59 evaluation may be performed on a plant-specific basis in the future.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact me at (301) 415-2296.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Carl F. Lyon, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-263

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Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant

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