

April 15, 1998

Mr. Nathan L. Haskell
Director, Licensing
Palisades Plant
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway
Covert, MI 49043

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT
IMPACT - (TAC NO. M94287)

Dear Mr. Haskell:

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" for the Palisades Plant. The assessment relates to your application for amendment dated December 11, 1995, as supplemented by letters dated January 18, September 3, October 2, October 18, and October 25, 1996, and March 28, 1997. The proposed amendment would revise Section 6, "Administrative Controls," of the Palisades Technical Specifications (TS) to conform to the format and content of NUREG-1432, "Standard Technical Specifications (STS), Combustion Engineering Plants," and would revise certain related surveillance requirements. The staff issued Amendment 174 on October 31, 1996, in partial response to the request. The assessment addresses the section of your amendment request that would revise the TS requirements regarding liquid effluent radioactive material concentration limits.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Robert G. Schaaf, Project Manager
Project Directorate III-1
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-255

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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Consumers Energy Company

Palisades Plant

cc:

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Lansing, Michigan 48913

March 1998

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONCONSUMERS POWER COMPANYDOCKET NO. 50-255PALISADES PLANTENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OFNO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-20, issued to Consumers Energy Company, (the licensee), for operation of the Palisades Plant located in Van Buren County, Michigan.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed amendment would revise the limitations on concentrations of radioactive material released in liquid effluents and reflects the relocation of the prior 10 CFR 20.106 requirements to the revised 10 CFR 20.1302.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated December 11, 1995, as supplemented January 18, September 3, October 2, October 18, and October 25, 1996, and March 28, 1997.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is needed to update the Technical Specifications (TS) to incorporate the revised requirements of 10 CFR Part 20 (i.e., the need for the proposed action was created by a change in the regulatory requirements).

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The proposed revision, in regard to the actual release rates as referenced in the TS as a limitation on the concentration of radioactive material released in liquid effluents, will not increase the types or amounts of effluents that may be released offsite, nor increase individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposures. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed amendment.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed changes do not affect nonradiological effluents and have no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed amendment.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the NRC staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for Palisades dated June 1972.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on February 12, 1998, the NRC staff consulted with the Michigan State official, Dennis Hahn, of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality,

Drinking Water and Radiological Protection Division, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

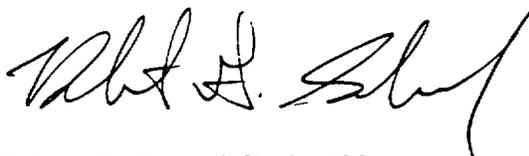
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letters dated December 11, 1995, January 18, September 3, October 2, October 18, and October 25, 1996, and March 28, 1997, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Van Wylen Library, Hope College, Holland, Michigan 49423.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 15th day of April 1998.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Robert G. Schaaf, Project Manager
Project Directorate III-1
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation