

December 20, 1990

Docket No. 50-255

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Mr. Gerald B. Slade  
Plant General Manager  
Palisades Plant  
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway  
Covert, Michigan 49043

Dear Mr. Slade:

SUBJECT: PALISADES PLANT - NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT  
(TAC NO. 77111)

The Commission has requested the Office of the Federal Register to publish the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Provisional Operating License and Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination and Opportunity for Hearing." This notice relates to your application for amendment dated June 12, 1990, and subsequently revised by letters dated November 9 and December 7, 1990. This application for amendment proposes to revise Technical Specification (TS) 3.3.1.b, "Emergency Core Cooling System", to reduce the required minimum boron solution level in the Safety Injection Tanks (SIT) from 186 inches to 174 inches, and to raise the maximum allowed tank level from 198 to 200 inches. This change effectively broadens the operating band at which SIT level must be maintained from 12 to 26 inches.

Two related Technical Specification changes were also submitted. First, a new surveillance requirement to check the SIT high and low level alarms was proposed to be included in TS table 4.1.2. Secondly, the Basis section for TS 3.3.1 has been updated and two TS references have been added.

The proposed changes provide increased flexibility to the control room operators in maintaining SIT level within limits, while still providing assurance that adequate borated water is available for injection from the SITs.

Sincerely,

/s/

Brian Holian, Project Manager  
Project Directorate III-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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P PDR

Enclosure:  
Notice

cc w/enclosure:  
See next page

LA/PD31:DRP345  
SMEADOR  
12/20/90 *JAW*

PM/PD31:DRP345  
BHOLIAN *BEH*  
12/20/90

D/PD31:DRP345  
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UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

December 20, 1990

Docket No. 50-255

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Plant General Manager  
Palisades Plant  
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway  
Covert, Michigan 49043

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Holian".

Brian Holian, Project Manager  
Project Directorate III-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:  
Notice

cc w/enclosure:  
See next page

Mr. Gerald B. Slade  
Consumers Power Company

Palisades Plant

cc:

M. I. Miller, Esquire  
Sidley & Austin  
54th Floor  
One First National Plaza  
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Nuclear Facilities and  
Environmental Monitoring  
Section Office  
Division of Radiological  
Health  
P.O. Box 30035  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Mr. Thomas A. McNish, Secretary  
Consumers Power Company  
212 West Michigan Avenue  
Jackson, Michigan 49201

Gerald Charnoff, P.C.  
Shaw, Pittman, Potts &  
Trowbridge  
2300 N. Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037

Judd L. Bacon, Esquire  
Consumers Power Company  
212 West Michigan Avenue  
Jackson, Michigan 49201

Mr. David L. Brannen  
Vice President  
Palisades Generating Plant  
c/o Bechtel Power Corporation  
15740 Shady Grove Road  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

Regional Administrator, Region III  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
799 Roosevelt Road  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Jerry Sarno  
Township Supervisor  
Covert Township  
36197 M-140 Highway  
Covert, Michigan 49043

Office of the Governor  
Room 1 - Capitol Building  
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Mr. David J. Vandewalle  
Director, Safety and Licensing  
Palisades Plant  
27780 Blue Star Memorial Hwy.  
Covert, Michigan 49043

Resident Inspector  
c/o U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Palisades Plant  
27782 Blue Star Memorial Hwy.  
Covert, Michigan 49043

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
CONSUMERS POWER COMPANY  
NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO  
FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS  
CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING

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

The proposed amendment would change Technical Specification 3.3.1.b, "Emergency Core Cooling System", to reduce the required minimum boron solution level in the Safety Injection Tanks (SIT) from 186 inches to 174 inches, and to raise the maximum allowed tank level from 198 to 200 inches. This change effectively broadens the operating band at which SIT level must be maintained from 12 to 26 inches. Two related Technical Specification changes were also submitted. First, a new surveillance requirement to check the SIT high and low level alarms was proposed to be included in TS table 4.1.2. Secondly, the Basis section for TS 3.3.1 has been updated and two TS references have been added.

The proposed changes provide increased flexibility to the control room operators in maintaining SIT level within limits, while still providing assurance that adequate borated water is available for injection from the SITs.

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Before issuance of the proposed license amendments, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The licensee provided an analysis that addressed the above three standards in the amendment application.

1. The proposed change would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated because the probability of a Loss of Coolant Accident (LOCA) is independent of the liquid level in the SITs; and, the effect of a slightly reduced total liquid volume in the SITs was evaluated by Advanced Nuclear Fuels Corporation (ANF), the fuel vendor for the Palisades Plant. The ANF analysis indicates that the proposed change in SIT inventory will not significantly affect the results of the current licensing basis LOCA analysis and that the current analysis remains bounding. Because the change involves a relatively small increase in the potential maximum amount of water stored in the SITs, the probability of overfilling, containment flooding and malfunctions due to seismic events are not significantly increased.

2. The proposed change would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated because in the event of a LOCA, the only type of accident involved, the entire boron solution content of the SITs is injected into the primary coolant system (PCS) when the PCS pressure is reduced below that of the SITs and their elevation head. Therefore, the proposed change in the liquid level required by the Technical Specifications does not change the function of the SITs nor does it affect the interface between the SITs and other plant systems. Analysis by ANF concludes that for a large break LOCA, reduction of minimum SIT level does not change the result of the event.
3. The proposed change would not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety. The SITs are a system in which the function is to discharge its entire content of borated water in the primary coolant system (PCS) when the PCS pressure drops below a specified amount. This function is independent of the initial level of the SITs. If a worst case LOCA were to occur with the SITs at the proposed minimum level, the total volume of coolant available for addition to the PCS is reduced by an insignificant amount in view of the total volume of the PCS, the SITs and the Safety Injection Refueling Water Tank (SIRWT). Analysis shows that when the contents of the SITs are at the proposed lower level, and after a LOCA, the SITs do not empty until after the peak cladding temperature (PCT) is reached and until after high pressure and low pressure safety injection are actuated. At the time the SITs do empty, the cladding temperature continues to decrease. In addition, the LOCA

containment analysis, which conservatively did not take credit for SIT injection, shows that peak containment pressure during this event stays below the design pressure. Therefore, since the PCT is not raised, containment pressure remains within design criteria, and the amount of borated water for safety injection recirculation is not significantly reduced, this change does not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety.

Therefore, based on the above considerations, the Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 30 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination. The Commission will not normally make a final determination unless it receives a request for a hearing.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Regulatory Publications Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room P-223, Phillips Building, 7920 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By January 25, 1991, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and petitions for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714 which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555 and at the local public document room located at the Joseph P. Mann Liberty, 1516 Sixteenth Street, Two Rivers, Wisconsin. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR §2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made a party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding;

and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to fifteen (15) days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner

who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If a hearing is requested, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves a significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 30-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the notice period such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 30-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final

determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish a notice of issuance and provide for opportunity for a hearing after issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C., by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last ten (10) days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1 (800) 325-6000 (in Missouri 1 (800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number 3737 and the following message addressed to L. B. Marsh: petitioner's name and telephone number; date petition was mailed; plant name; and publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and to Judd L. Bacon, Esq., Consumers Power Company, 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan 49201, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer, or the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition

and/or request, should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(i)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated August 3, 1989, as amended October 3, 1989, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20555, and at the Van Zoeren Library, Hope College, Holland, Michigan 49423.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 20th day of December 1990.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



L. B. Marsh, Director  
Project Directorate III-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation