

December 17, 1990

Docket No. 50-255

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

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GPA/PA

Dear Mr. Slade:

SUBJECT: PALISADES PLANT - NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT
(TAC NO. 77952)

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 November 2, 1990 which would revise Technical Specification 3.17 and update Tables 3.17.1, 3.17.4, 3.25.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.3, and 4.21.1 to reflect the new Regulatory Guide 1.97 Qualified Neutron Monitoring System installed during this outage.

The changes in the neutron monitoring system involve using existing fission chambers, installing new cables from the fission chambers through two new electric penetrations to preamplifiers (previously located inside, but now located outside containment), and installing new cables from the preamplifiers to power sources in the Control Room. The new system is qualified to the criteria of Regulatory Guide 1.97, whereas the previously existing system was not.

In addition, a change to Technical Specification 5.3.2d would change the description of the mechanically fixed absorber rods used at the Palisades Plant.

Sincerely,

/s/

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

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Enclosure:
Notice

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

LA/PD31:DRP345
SMEADOR
12/4/90 *RWJ*

PM/PD31:DRP345
BHOLIAN
12/4/90 *RWJ*

(A)D/PD31:DRP345
JSTANG
12/4/90

PALISADES INDIV. SHOLLY 77952

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/s/

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

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PALISADES INDIV. SHOLLY 77952



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

December 17, 1990

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Plant General Manager
Palisades Plant
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway
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The changes in the neutron monitoring system involve using existing fission chambers, installing new cables from the fission chambers through two new electric penetrations to preamplifiers (previously located inside, but now located outside containment), and installing new cables from the preamplifiers to power sources in the Control Room. The new system is qualified to the criteria of Regulatory Guide 1.97, whereas the previously existing system was not.

In addition, a change to Technical Specification 5.3.2d would change the description of the mechanically fixed absorber rods used at the Palisades Plant.

Sincerely,

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

Brian E. 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:

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Sidley & Austin
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Consumers Power Company
212 West Michigan Avenue
Jackson, Michigan 49201

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

Regional Administrator, Region III
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Jerry Sarno
Township Supervisor
Covert Township
36197 M-140 Highway
Covert, Michigan 49043

Office of the Governor
Room 1 - Capitol Building
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Mr. David J. Vandewalle
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Resident Inspector
c/o U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Palisades Plant
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Gerald Charnoff, P.C.
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Washington, D.C. 20037

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

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONCONSUMERS POWER COMPANYNOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT TO
PROVISIONAL 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 an 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 allow use of the Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.97 qualified neutron monitoring system which is being installed during the current refueling outage. The changes in the neutron monitoring system involve using existing fission chambers, installing new cables from the fission chambers through two new electric penetrations to preamplifiers (previously located inside, but now located outside containment), and installing new cables from the preamplifiers to power sources in the Control Room. The new system is qualified to the criteria of RG 1.97, whereas the previously existing system was not. Additionally, a change is proposed to the description of the mechanically fixed absorber rods.

Specifically, Technical Specification (TS) 3.17, and Tables 3.17.1, 3.17.4, 3.25.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.3, and 4.21.1 are updated to reflect the new RG 1.97 qualified neutron monitoring system installed during this outage. Additionally, TS 5.3.2d is revised to correct the description of fixed absorber rods in use at the plant.

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 changes would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated because these changes enhance the reliability of the accuracy of the neutron monitoring function under accident conditions and permit use of material other than boron as a neutron absorber in the fixed absorber rods. The Source Range and Wide Range neutron monitoring instrument systems perform the same function as existing systems. The new RG 1.97 qualified instrument systems will monitor reactor power more reliably under accident conditions and will provide the operator with more reliable information which may allow actions to be taken that could reduce the consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The use of material other than boron in the fixed absorber rods will not effect the probability or the consequences of an accident previously evaluated since the fuel reload design, using Boron or other absorbers in the fixed absorber rods, must meet the same fuel design criteria.

2. The proposed change would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated because this Technical Specification change only reflects the use of upgraded neutron monitoring equipment and fixed absorber rods which will perform the same function as existing equipment.

3. The proposed change would not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety because the upgraded neutron monitoring equipment identified in this proposed change performs the same function as existing equipment and will be more reliable under accident conditions. The degree of redundancy of the new equipment remains the same.

The mechanically fixed absorber rods using material other than boron meet fuel reload design criteria.

Absorber materials other than boron perform the same function as boron within the reload design criteria and the use of absorber materials other than boron does not effect the margin of safety.

Therefore, the margin of safety is not reduced by the new more stringently qualified neutron monitoring system or by using different neutron absorbing material in the fixed absorber rods.

Since these changes only reflect use of material or equipment which will perform the same functions as existing equipment, they

do 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 23, 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 Van Zoeren Library, Hope College, Holland, Michigan. 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 November 2, 1990, 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 17th 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