

March 27, 2003

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-03-014A**

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 Power Plant  
Nuclear Management Corporation, LLC  
Covert, MI 49043  
Docket: 50-255  
License: DPR-20**

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

Notification of Unusual Event  
 Alert  
 Site Area Emergency  
 General Emergency  
 Not Applicable

**SUBJECT: PALISADES LOSS OF SHUTDOWN COOLING CAUSED BY LOSS OF OFFSITE POWER (UPDATE)**

**DESCRIPTION:**

At 11:21 a.m. EST on March 25, 2003, the licensee declared an Alert under its emergency plan as a result of the loss of shutdown reactor cooling capability following a loss of offsite electrical power. The plant has been shut down since March 16, 2003, for refueling and maintenance.

The licensee reported that the circuit breakers, which connect plant electrical buses to the offsite power grid, opened for an unknown cause. The plant's two emergency diesel generators started automatically, and plant safety system electrical loads were transferred to the diesel generators. Shutdown cooling was promptly restored. Reactor cooling system temperature, which had risen about 11 degrees F., was stabilized. At 12:31 p.m. the plant reduced the emergency level to an Unusual Event.

The licensee has identified the preliminary cause of the offsite electrical failure as damage to an underground cable during the installation of a sign post in the facility's parking lot. The cable appears to have been located closer to the ground surface than it was supposed to be. The licensee's investigation into the event is ongoing.

The licensee is in the process of making repairs to restore power to the safety buses. The plant safety systems continue to be powered by diesel generators.

NRC inspectors have been dispatched to the site to conduct a special inspection into the circumstances around the event. Region III (Chicago) Incident Response Center remains in the monitoring phase of its emergency response procedures.

The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 1:00 p.m. on March 27, 2003.

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