UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4005

August 27, 2003

Clay C. Warren, Chief Nuclear Officer
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska 68321

SUBJECT: MIDCYCLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND INSPECTION PLAN - COOPER NUCLEAR STATION

Dear Mr. Warren:

On August 7, 2003, the NRC staff completed its midcycle plant performance assessment of Cooper Nuclear Station. The midcycle review for Cooper Nuclear Station involved the participation of all technical divisions in evaluating performance indicators (PIs) for the most recent quarter and inspection results for the first half of the current assessment cycle, January 1 through June 30, 2003. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility so that you will have an opportunity to prepare for these inspections and to inform us of any planned inspections that may conflict with your plant activities.

Plant performance for the most recent quarter remains in the Multiple/Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone column of the NRC's Action Matrix based on a degraded Emergency Preparedness Cornerstone that existed for more than four quarters. Cooper Nuclear Station entered the Multiple/Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone column of the NRC's Action Matrix on April 1, 2002. The White findings that contributed to the repetitive degraded cornerstone were identified during the 2000 and 2001 assessment periods and were described in the annual assessment letters dated May 29, 2001, and March 4, 2002.

Upon entry into the Multiple/Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone Column of the Action Matrix, and with oversight by the NRC, the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) developed a plan to improve performance at Cooper Nuclear Station. On June 10, 2002, NPPD submitted Revision 1 of The Strategic Improvement Plan to the NRC. On August 22, 2002, the NRC completed a supplemental inspection using Inspection Procedure 95003, "Inspection for Repetitive Degraded Cornerstones, Multiple Degraded Cornerstones, Multiple Yellow Inputs, or One Red Input." Following completion of the NRC supplemental inspection, NPPD revised its improvement plan and submitted Revision 2 of the plan to the NRC on November 25, 2002. On January 30, 2003, NRC issued a Confirmatory Action Letter to NPPD. The purpose of the Confirmatory Action Letter was to confirm the commitments made by NPPD regarding completion of those actions in the improvement plan developed to address regulatory performance issues. Licensee actions confirmed in the Confirmatory Action Letter addressed long-standing performance issues in the areas of emergency preparedness, human performance, material condition and equipment reliability, plant modification and configuration

control, corrective action program, and engineering programs. The NRC is performing periodic inspections to verify completion of these actions and the effectiveness of these actions in addressing the specific performance issues. Two of these inspections were completed during the first two quarters of 2003. Cooper Nuclear Station will remain in the Multiple/Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone Column of the Action Matrix until the satisfactory completion of the actions listed in this Confirmatory Action Letter and NPPD has demonstrated sustained improvements in plant performance.

In our annual assessment letter dated March 4, 2003, we advised you of substantive crosscutting issues in the areas of Problem Identification and Resolution and Human Performance. Performance in these areas continues to be of concern based on the inspection findings identified during the first two quarters of 2003. Your improvement plan provides for specific actions to address these areas. These activities and any changes resulting from these activities will be reviewed during the scheduled quarterly inspections of the actions described in the Confirmatory Action Letter and as part of the baseline inspection program.

The enclosed inspection plan details the inspections scheduled through September 30, 2004. In addition to the baseline inspections, quarterly inspections to verify the actions taken with respect to the improvement plan and the Confirmatory Action Letter will be conducted as shown. The inspection plan is provided to minimize the resource impact on your staff and to allow for scheduling conflicts and personnel availability to be resolved in advance of inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature. The inspections in the last 6 months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the end-of-cycle review meeting.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

If circumstances arise which cause us to change the inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact Kriss Kennedy at 817-860-8144 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Thomas P. Gwynn
Acting Regional Administrator

Docket: 50-298
License: DPR-46

Enclosure:
Cooper Nuclear Station Inspection/Activity Plan

cc:
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Cooper
Inspection / Activity Plan
08/01/2003 - 09/30/2004

Unit Number	Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site	Planned Dates Start	Planned Dates End	Inspection Type
	PSBS1-GP - SECURITY INSPECTION PROGRAM		**2**			
1	IP 7113002	Access Control (Search of Personnel, Packages, and Vehicles: Identification and Authorizat		08/11/2003	08/13/2003	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7113003	Response to Contingency Events (Protective Strategy and Implementation of Protective Stra		08/11/2003	08/13/2003	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		08/11/2003	08/13/2003	Baseline Inspections
	CNS CAL - CAL QUARTERLY INSPECTION		**3**			
1	IP 71152	Identification and Resolution of Problems		09/01/2003	11/15/2003	Other Routine
	OB-PIR - CNS PIR INSPECTION		**6**			
1	IP 71152B	Identification and Resolution of Problems		09/15/2003	09/26/2003	Baseline Inspections
	OB-RQ - REQUALIFICATION INSPECTION		**2**			
1	IP 7111111B	Licensed Operator Requalification		11/17/2003	11/21/2003	Baseline Inspections
	CNS CAL - CAL QUARTERLY INSPECTION		**4**			
1	IP 71152	Identification and Resolution of Problems		12/08/2003	12/12/2003	Other Routine
	CNS CAL - CAL QUARTERLY INSPECTION		**4**			
1	IP 71152	Identification and Resolution of Problems		02/23/2004	02/27/2004	Other Routine
	EMB - MAINTENANCE EFFECTIVENESS		**1**			
1	IP 7111112B	Maintenance Effectiveness		03/15/2004	03/19/2004	Baseline Inspections
	EMB - TRIENNIAL FIRE PROTECTION		**3**			
1	IP 7111105T	Fire Protection		04/05/2004	04/09/2004	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111105T	Fire Protection		04/19/2004	04/23/2004	Baseline Inspections
	EMB - PERM. PLANT MODIFICATIONS		**2**			
1	IP 7111117B	Permanent Plant Modifications		04/05/2004	04/09/2004	Baseline Inspections
	CNS CAL - CAL QUARTERLY INSPECTION		**4**			
1	IP 71152	Identification and Resolution of Problems		04/19/2004	04/24/2004	Other Routine
	2004041 - HX & HEAT SINK PERFORMANCE TESTING		**1**			
1	IP 7111107B	Heat Sink Performance		09/13/2004	09/17/2004	Baseline Inspections
	ALARA1 - ALARA PLANNING AND CONTROLS		**1**			
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		09/13/2004	09/17/2004	Baseline Inspections
	PSB-EP2 - EP EXERCISE		**3**			
1	IP 7111401	Exercise Evaluation		09/20/2004	09/24/2004	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111404	Emergency Action Level and Emergency Plan Changes		09/20/2004	09/24/2004	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		09/20/2004	09/24/2004	Baseline Inspections

This report does not include INPO and OUTAGE activities.
This report shows only on-site and announced inspection procedures.