



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 20, 1994

Mr. Robert A. Fenech  
Vice President, Nuclear Operations  
Consumers Power Company  
Palisades Plant  
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway  
Covert, MI 49043

*See Rpt.*

Dear Mr. Fenech:

SUBJECT: PALISADES PLANT - NRC FINAL SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF INDEPENDENT SPENT FUEL STORAGE INSTALLATION (ISFSI) SUPPORT PAD (TAC NO. M88875)

In May 1993, NRC issued a certificate of compliance, pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72, to Sierra Nuclear Corporation (SNC), approving the use of the VSC-24 cask, for a 20-year term, by holders of 10 CFR Part 50 licenses, as an ISFSI. The VSC-24 cask was first used under the general license by the Consumers Power Company (CPCo) at the Palisades plant in Michigan. Since that time, questions were raised about the possible effects of earthquakes and erosion at the Palisades site on the safe storage of spent fuel in the VSC-24 dry casks. On the basis of these concerns, in March 1994, NRC initiated an independent assessment to more closely examine the behavior of the pad at Palisades with respect to seismic and other natural hazards in order to address concerns that have been raised subsequent to the construction and initial use of the facility. The staff's preliminary findings are described in a draft safety assessment (DSA) forwarded to you on May 18, 1994.

On May 23, 1994, a public meeting was held with CPCo in Benton Harbor, Michigan, to discuss CPCo's examination of the dry cask storage pad and NRC's independent assessment of that examination. Since that meeting, NRC continued to address comments and questions received from the public regarding the dry cask storage at Palisades. The enclosed final safety assessment (FSA) contains the results of the NRC independent examination of the location of the foundation for the ISFSI at Palisades. Attached to the FSA are NRC responses to the appropriate comments and questions on this issue.

After careful consideration of the public comments and the technical evaluations performed by CPCo and by NRC's consultants, the staff's FSA concludes that the location of the storage pad at the Palisades site is acceptable to support the concrete storage cask against all effects of the design-basis earthquake for the site, and against other such postulated natural hazards as high winds and floods. Furthermore, the VSC-24 dry casks and the concrete storage pad will not pose any unacceptable risk to public health and safety because of substantial horizontal and vertical separation of the ISFSI from the lake shore, the installed shoreline protection, surveillance and monitoring programs established by CPCo, and the ability to take remedial measures to remove sand deposited by wind or water. We recognize that your surveillance and monitoring programs further ensure safe operation of the dry cask storage. Please keep the records of your surveillance available for future NRC review. The NRC staff reviewed CPCo's

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Palisades Plant

Docket No. 50-255

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cc: Plant Service list

analyses and determined that the its conclusions are similar to those of the NRC. Please contact the NRC Project Manager, Mr. Tony Hsia, at (301) 504-3028, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

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

Docket No. 50-255

Enclosure:  
Final Safety Assessment, w/attachments

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