

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION - REGION III

September 29, 2008

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE - PNO-III-08-009A

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

Monticello Nuclear Generating Station
Nuclear Management Company (NMC)
Monticello, Minnesota
Docket: 50-263
License: DPR-22

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: UNPLANNED SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS - UPDATE

DESCRIPTION:

On September 11, 2008, at 10:47 p.m. (CDT), while the 1R transformer was out-of-service for maintenance, the 2R transformer experienced a lockout resulting in a loss of normal offsite power to the non-safety buses, a reactor scram, and a Group 1, 2 and 3 isolation. Offsite power to the safety-related buses was still available through the 1AR transformer. However, upon the loss of the 2R transformer, both emergency diesel generators (EDG) started and were running unloaded as designed and as expected.

The high pressure coolant injection (HPCI) operated as expected to maintain water level; however, it did not automatically trip at the high reactor water level set point (+48 inches) as required, and was manually isolated by the operators. Additionally, the automatic depressurization system (ADS) timer showed erratic indication following the event and was inhibited to prevent automatic action. The conditions for automatic action of ADS were not met. The operators were also unable to either remotely or locally lower the speed of the 12 EDG to restore it to a standby condition. HPCI, ADS, and the 12 EDG were subsequently declared inoperable, but were still considered available.

On September 17, 2008, with the Monticello plant continuing to be shut down for a forced maintenance outage to deal with the equipment problems from the September 11 reactor scram, a Notice-of-Unusual Event was declared when a truck with a telescoping boom struck a power line providing offsite power to the plant, resulting in a loss of power to some equipment at the facility. This incident occurred outside of the protected area, which resulted in a fatality to the contract worker operating the boom. The incident also resulted in the temporary loss of shutdown cooling to the reactor. The NRC subsequently entered the Monitoring Mode and began monitoring the event from the Region III Incident Response Center. The NRC exited Monitoring Mode on September 18.

An NRC Special Inspection Team was sent to the Monticello site to review the circumstances surrounding the September 11 and 17 partial loss of offsite power events. This team was on-site during the September 17 event and assisted in the NRC response.

The plant went critical at 0330 on September 27, 2008, following the restoration of the 1R and 2R transformers and repairs to the ADS, HPCI and 12 EDG systems. The licensee expects to return to 100 percent reactor power by October 1, 2008.

The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

The State of Minnesota has been notified.

This information is current as of 10:00 a.m. on September 29, 2008.

CONTACT: Ken Riemer
630-829-9628

Nirodh Shah
630-829-9821