



NRC NEWS

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Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

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NRC ISSUES FINAL SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued its final safety evaluation report (SER) for the proposed renewal of the operating licenses for the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant Units 1 and 2. The NRC staff concluded there are no open items that would preclude license renewal for an additional 20 years of operation.

The report documents the results of the NRC staff's review of the license renewal application and site audits of the plant's aging management programs to address the safety of plant operations during the period of extended operation. Overall, the results show that the applicant has identified actions that have been or will be taken to manage the effects of aging in the appropriate systems, structures and components of the plant and that their functions will be maintained during the period of extended operation.

Issuing the final SER is a significant milestone in the license renewal review process. This process proceeds along two tracks – one for review of safety issues and another for environmental issues. The SER marks the completion of the NRC staff's safety review that is published and subsequently reviewed and publicly discussed by the agency's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS). The staff is in the process of reviewing the environmental part of the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating plant's license renewal application. That review must be completed before a final decision is made on the renewal.

The SER and the license renewal application have been provided to the ACRS, an independent body of experts that advises the Commission on reactor safety matters. The ACRS will discuss the SER during its December meeting, details of which will be posted on the NRC Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acrs/agenda/2009/>. The ACRS will later issue a letter discussing the results of its review.

Northern States Power Co. submitted the application on April 15, 2008, to extend the plant's licenses by 20 years for each unit. The Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant has two pressurized-water reactors and it is located 28 miles southeast of Minneapolis, Minn. The current operating licenses expire Aug. 9, 2013, for Unit 1 and Oct. 29, 2014, for Unit 2.

In a letter dated Oct. 16, Brian Holian, director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation's Division of License Renewal, provided Northern States Power Co. with the SER. The final SER will be available on the NRC's Web site at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/prairie-island.html>.

Documents related to Prairie Island's SER are also located at the Red Wing Public Library, 225 East Ave., Red Wing, Minn.

Additional information concerning license renewal in general and the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant's application in particular can be found at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/license-renewal-bg.html> and
<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications.html>, respectively.

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