Central files

NSP

NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55401

December 14, 1979

Mr. James G. Keppler
Director - Region III
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Dear Mr. Keppler:

MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT
Docket No. 50-263 License No. DPR-22
IE Bulletin No. 79-26

The operating history of the Monticello reactor has been reviewed specifically with respect to cumulative control blade exposure. This establishes the record of current B-10 depletion for every control blade in the core. This record has been and will continue to be maintained by the plant computer and nuclear engineers.

At this time and throughout the remainder of the current operating cycle, no control blades are predicted to reach 34 percent B-10 depletion in the upper quarter of the blade. Nevertheless, it is planned to replace 24 blades in the Monticello core during the upcoming refueling outage scheduled for February, 1980. The blades to be discharged will have accumulated between 26 percent and 33 percent average fractional depletion in the upper quarter of the blade. Testing and evaluation of these blades, which had been planned prior to the receipt of IE Bulletin 79-26, will help determine the ultimate disposition of blades which are discharged from the Monticello core.

Shutdown margin testing prescribed in the Bulletin will be conducted after the next refueling in conjunction with Physics Startup Testing described in the NRR Safety Evaluation supporting Amendment No. 37 to Provisional Operating License No. DPR-22.

If additional information is required, please communicate directly with plant management.

Yours very truly,

L. J. Wachter

L. J. Wachter
Vice President - Power Production
and System Operation

cc: Mr. G. Charnoff
NRC Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Washington, D.C.

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