

February 23, 2015

Raymond McKinley
NRC
Via Email

Hello Ray:

Pilgrim is not the only one with leaks; but leaks in our over 200 year old house are due to ice dams, not poor maintenance.



Pilgrim's delay in restart - tube plugs falling out

My understanding is that the startup delay resulted from the following; please correct me if this is not accurate.

- Tube plugs fell out of the condensate tubes. Sea water then leaked into the fresh side of the condenser that contains the water that will go back into the reactor vessel.
- Because salt water would cause the stainless steel of the reactor to corrode and eventually cause a failure of the vessel and all its stainless steel pipes, the water is cleaned in the condenser demineralizer.

- During Pilgrim’s startup, because of the loss of tube plugs, the salt water intrusion was too much for the condensate demineralizers to remove and the feedwater system and the reactor vessel were in jeopardy of massive salt water intrusion.
- As a result, the condensate demineralizers were shut down and the resin in the demineralizer was replaced and the tube plugs were re-installed.

Questions:

1. Were some tubes in the condenser plugged because they had failed and were leaking?
 - a. When did the tubes start to leak?
 - b. Why were they plugged and not replaced?
 - c. Did NRC approve that fix?
 - d. What is the industry history of outcomes of plugging tubes versus replacement?

2. Why did the plugs come out- sounds like poor maintenance is that correct?
 - a. Is there a guidance or protocol calling for inspection of plugs prior to startup?
 - b. Were the tube plugs inspected before the recent plant started up?
 - c. What is the maintenance schedule and how does it match Entergy’s performance?
 - d. If there was an inspection, was it done right?
 - e. Supposedly there is a map of the tube sheet that shows what tubes are supposed to be plugged
 - i. Was the map accurate?
 - ii. Did the maintenance crew read the map correctly?

3. Did any salt get into the reactor?
 - a. What tests were performed to assure that salt did not get into the reactor?
 - b. If any salt did get into the reactor, what protocol should, and will be, followed?

Thank you in advance,

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