



**UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
REGION I  
2100 RENAISSANCE BLVD.  
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406-2713

September 6, 2016

Ms. Judith Merl  
P.O. Box 196  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

Dear Ms. Merl,

This letter responds to your letter that requested the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station be shutdown based on its recent poor operating performance. The NRC shares your concern regarding the safety impact of the degrading performance at Pilgrim. On September 1, 2015, the NRC issued a White finding and Notice of Violation to Pilgrim because Entergy had not adequately addressed a significant equipment problem that caused a failure of one of the plant's safety/relief valves in February 2013 and then caused in a similar failure in January 2015. This issue combined with a failure to adequately address the causes of multiple reactor shutdowns at Pilgrim in 2013 were indications of degrading performance that moved them into Column 4 (the "Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone" Column) of the NRC Action Matrix.

The NRC believes that to this point Pilgrim continues to operate safely because the issues that moved them into Column 4 were of low to moderate safety significance; however, the increased oversight, inspection, and assessment directed by the assessment process for a plant in Column 4 now allows us to closely monitor for indications of unacceptable performance. If at any time it is determined that performance at Pilgrim has declined to an unacceptable level with respect to public safety, the NRC will not hesitate to take additional regulatory action up to and including the issuance of a shutdown order. More information regarding our additional oversight activities at Pilgrim is also available at the following website: <http://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/reactors/pilg/special-oversight.html>.

We hope that this addresses your concerns regarding the NRC's actions in response to the recent degrading performance at Pilgrim. However, if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding these issues please feel free to contact us at 610-337-5030 or 610-337-5031.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Jonathan B. Pfingsten, Project Engineer  
Reactor Projects Branch 5  
Division of Reactor Projects

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