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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Subject: **COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION, DOCKET NO. 50-397
REACTOR VESSEL SURVEILLANCE CAPSULE**

Dear Sir or Madam:

During Columbia Generating Station's (Columbia) refuel outage in May 2017, the reactor vessel surveillance capsule specimen holder located at the 300 degree azimuth (300 degree capsule) was found to have failed at the specimen rod to basket interface. The specimen basket was found on the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) baffle plate and the specimen rod was still hanging in place on the reactor pressure vessel RPV wall. The specimen capsules themselves remained in the basket and intact. The cause of the failure is still under investigation. All piece parts from the specimen holder were retrieved and removed from the vessel. The remaining two specimen holders were examined and showed no signs of wear, degradation or movement.

The Capsule Surveillance Program is governed by Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) Appendix A, Section A.2.1.46, Reactor Vessel Surveillance Program, and the Boiling Water Reactor Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP) Integrated Surveillance Program (ISP). The FSAR requires that Energy Northwest follow the requirements of the ISP.

The 300 degree capsule is the C capsule and was removed in 1996 for testing. The contents were reconstituted and reinstalled in the vessel in 1997; as such it is not one of the two remaining stand-by capsules identified in BWRVIP-86, Updated BWR Integrated Surveillance Program (ISP) Implementation Plan," Revision 1-A, Table 3-1. The two stand-by capsules remain in the vessel.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) formal notification that the Columbia Reactor Vessel 300 degree surveillance capsule (tested, non-ISP test capsule) was removed from the reactor during the refueling outage in May 2017. The capsule has been stored in the spent fuel pool.

This notification is required by BWRVIP-135, "Integrated Surveillance Program (ISP) Data Source Book and Plant Evaluations," Revision 3, which states that licensees who remove a non-ISP capsule from their RPV for storage in the facility's spent fuel pool must notify the NRC of this change. Per ISP guidance, the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) BWRVIP ISP program manager has also been notified of the removal.

Columbia's staff is working with the EPRI/BWRVIP ISP program manager to determine if the capsule should be reinstalled to support industry initiatives. This issue is identified in the corrective action program. Columbia will retain the capsule in the spent fuel pool and ensure the capsule is maintained in a condition to allow re-installation, if required, until a final disposition is determined.

There are no regulatory commitments contained in this letter.

If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, please contact Ms. L. L. Williams, Licensing Supervisor, at 509-377-8148.

Executed this 28th day of August, 2017.

Respectfully,



 D.W. Gregoire
Regulatory Affairs & Performance Improvement Manager

cc: NRC RIV Regional Administrator
NRC NRR Project Manager
NRC Senior Resident Inspector/988C
CD Sonoda – BPA/1399
WA Horin – Winston & Strawn