



**Consumers
Power
Company**

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October 17, 1980

Mr James G Keppler
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Region III
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

DOCKET 50-255 - LICENSE DPR-20 -
PALISADES PLANT - RESPONSE TO
IE INSPECTION REPORT 80-15

Consumers Power Company's response to the apparent infractions noted in IE
Inspection Report 80-15 dated September 24, 1980 are as follows:

Item 1

Technical Specification 3.20.1 permits operation up to 72 hours with a single safety-related snubber inoperable; requiring the reactor be in cold shutdown within 36 hours after these conditions cannot be met.

Contrary to the above, after two safety-related snubbers (No 5 and 9) were determined inoperable at 1400 on 12 May 1980, the licensee neither restored at least one snubber to operability nor placed the reactor in cold shutdown within 36 hours.

Response to Item 1

Consumers Power Company takes exception to the NRC interpretation of the Palisades Plant Technical Specification (TS) 3.20.1. We do not find anywhere in the basis section of the TS or in the SER that states when a single safety-related snubber is inoperable for 72 hours that the reactor is to be in cold shutdown within 36 hours after these conditions cannot be met. The standard Technical Specifications have also been reviewed to provide clarification of this problem. They specifically state that with one or more hydraulic snubbers inoperable, replace or restore the inoperable snubber(s) to operable status within 72 hours or be in at least hot standby within the next 6 hours and in cold shutdown within the following 30 hours.

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Based on the above discussion and interpretation, we maintain the fact that we can operate with one or more snubber's being declared inoperable under Section 3.20.1.

Item 2

Technical Specification 6.9.2 contains requirements for reporting selected occurrences to NRC.

- a. Paragraph 6.9.2.a(2) requires notification within 24 hours for operation with any parameter subject to a limiting condition for operation (LCO) less conservative than the least conservative aspect of the LCO.

Contrary to the above, notification was not made within 24 hours after a least conservative aspect of TS 3.20.1, permitting operation above cold shutdown with a single safety-related snubber inoperable, was exceeded on 12 May 1980 by operation above cold shutdown with two inoperable safety-related snubbers.

Response to Item 2.a

As stated in the discussion to Item 1, we were not in violation of the Palisades Plant TS 3.20.1. Therefore, we did not have to report this event under Section 6.9.2.a(2) of the Palisades TS.

Item 2.b

Paragraph 6.9.2.b(2) requires a written report within 30 days for conditions leading to operation in a degraded mode permitted by an LCO.

Contrary to the above, no written report was submitted within 30 days after the Plant was heated above cold shutdown on 10 May 1980 with an inoperable safety-related snubber; a degraded mode permitted by TS 3.20.1.c.

Response to Item 2.b

Palisades Technical Specification 3.20.1.c specifically states:

"If a snubber is determined to be inoperable while the reactor is in either cold shutdown or refueling mode, the snubber shall be made operable or replaced prior to the reactor being made critical."

As allowed by this TS, the Palisades Plant was heated above cold shutdown to hot shutdown on May 10, 1980 with a safety-related snubber inoperable. This snubber was repaired and declared operable prior to going to a hot standby condition (ie, reactor critical).

Based on the above, it is our conclusion that no action statement was entered. Therefore, we did not have to report this event under Section 6.9.2.b(2) of the Palisades TS.

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Summary

Consumers Power Company disagrees (based on past practice and comparison with the standard Technical Specifications) with the IE inspectors' interpretation of the Palisades Plant Technical Specifications and requests that these apparent items of noncompliance be withdrawn.

Steven R Frost (Signed)

Steven R Frost
Palisades Nuclear Licensing Engineer

CC. Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Director, Office of Inspection and Enforcement
NRC Resident Inspector-Palisades