

Hardgrove, Matthew

From: Sheehan, Neil
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:03 AM
To: Hardgrove, Matthew
Subject: FW: NRC response re: Pilgrim nuclear power plant downpower

From: Sheehan, Neil
Sent: Thursday, July 19, 2018 2:41 PM
To: 'Mary Lampert' <mary.lampert@comcast.net>
Subject: NRC response re: Pilgrim nuclear power plant downpower

Mary,

This email responds to your two June 29, 2018, emails to NRC Acting Region I Administrator David Lew requesting additional information related to a downpower at the Pilgrim nuclear power plant on June 28.

As reported by Entergy, power was reduced by 30 percent due to rising temperatures in the condenser hotwell. By reducing power operators ensured that condenser temperatures remained within design parameters. A thermal backwash of the condenser was completed and power was restored to 100 percent. These actions were not mandated by the NRC.

NRC regulations place stringent quality requirements on structures, systems and components that are most important to safety (i.e., safety-related). The Pilgrim condenser hotwell is important to power production, but it is not safety-related and not subject to the NRC's most stringent requirements. Nevertheless, the NRC does monitor the plant owner's maintenance of this equipment to ensure it is sufficiently reliable, so as to minimize the number of times operators have to adjust plant configuration and/or power levels in an unplanned manner.

As part of their normal review of daily operations at the plant, the NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to Pilgrim reviewed the circumstances associated with the downpower on June 28. They determined the plant was operated safely and in accordance with site procedures, and they identified no safety concerns. No additional follow-up is planned.

Thank you for your concern regarding the safe operation of the Pilgrim nuclear power plant.

Neil Sheehan
 NRC Public Affairs
 (610) 337-5331

Hello David:

RE: INCREASE CONDENSER HOT WELL WATER TEMPERATURE (JUNE 28, 2018)

Another set of questions came up.

- What is Pilgrim's maintenance schedule for the feedwater heater high level drain vales that go to the hotwell.
- How often do they check them?
- Are any showing signs of leakage?

- How about the drain valves off the steam line moisture separators, what about maintenance on them? Those have been known to leak in the past.
- If any of the valves mentioned are leaking then that means they would be dumping steam into the hotwell and would cause the hotwell temperature to rise. Which may be part of the problem.
- Are any of the feedwater heater drain valve indicator lights in the control room showing open?
- Are they measuring the temperature downstream of all those valves? How often?

Hope that you also are finding these questions helpful; and we look forward to the answers.

Thanks again,

Mary

From: Mary Lampert <mary.lampert@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2018 11:15 AM
To: Lew, David <David.Lew@nrc.gov>
Cc: Jackman, Michael <Michael.Jackman@mail.house.gov>; Lindsey Griffith (Markey) (Lindsey_Griffith@markey.senate.gov) <Lindsey_Griffith@markey.senate.gov>; Rory Clark (Markey) (Rory_Clark@markey.senate.gov) <Rory_Clark@markey.senate.gov>; Vogel, Hannah (Markey) <Hannah_Vogel@markey.senate.gov>
Subject: INCREASE CONDENSER HOT WELL WATER TEMPERATURE (JUNE 28, 2018)

David Lew
 Director, NRC Region I
 June 29, 2019
 Via Email

RE: INCREASE CONDENSER HOT WELL WATER TEMPERATURE (JUNE 28, 2018)

Hello David:

Pilgrim’s power status dropped to 30% on June 28 and naturally we wonder why. PNPS’ press release did not address the “suspected cause.”

Power Status

June 26	90%
June 27	90%
June 28	30%
June 29	30%

PNPS PRESS RELEASE

On Jun 28, 2018, at 15:50, Mary Lampert <mary.lampert@comcast.net> wrote:

As an update to Pilgrim’s Plant Status, Patrick O’Brien, the Station’s Senior Communications Specialist, has issued the following press statement today:

“Pilgrim has been operating at reduced power, since Saturday, after **routine monitoring noticed an increase in condenser hot well water temperatures**. Power was reduced to ensure that water temperature in the hot well remains within specified operating parameters. The hot well is a place on the steam side of the condenser where water collects

to provide a water source for the suction of the condensate pumps. A planned condenser thermal backwash was already scheduled for this Thursday and maintenance will be performed to address the suspected cause of the increased temperatures.”

QUESTIONS- WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM?

Here are some questions that have crossed our minds that we hope you will address.

1. Why do Pilgrim’s Staff wait for the temperature to go high before they schedule a backwash? If the plant engineers are really monitoring the reactor then they would have noticed the temperature going high. Is this a management issue again?
2. Could this be a condenser vacuum leak. A few years ago (2013) Pilgrim replaced the “dogbone”- the big seal between the condenser and turbine casing. If so, is this a manufacturers or faulty installation issue?
3. Could this be another feed water heater steam leak?
4. Last, we wonder if there is any steam leaking into the hotwell. The drain valves off the feedwater heaters used to leak years ago. They were replaced about 19 years ago.

Thank you and we look forward to your response.

Enjoy the 4th!

Mary



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