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NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55401

September 21, 1979

Mr. James G. Keppler
Director - Region III
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Dear Mr. Keppler:

PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT
Dockets No. 50-282 and No. 50-306

In response to IE Bulletin 79-18, the following is offered:

On August 30, 1979, a test was conducted to identify areas in the plant where the evacuation siren could not be heard. Tested areas included all areas in the Turbine Building and all areas in the Auxiliary Building that are accessible at power. On September 5, 1979, a test of Unit 1 Containment Building was conducted during a routine containment entry. All above testing was accomplished with both units at 100 percent power.

It was determined that all areas of the plant could hear the siren; however, in some areas, the volume level perceived was too low to attract quick attention. There were several areas in which the verbal announcements were either inaudible or could not be understood.

It is our position that (due to the fact that there are so many high noise areas) it is not absolutely necessary to be able to understand verbal announcements in all areas. If a person hears the evacuation siren, he should move to an area where he can hear the verbal announcement or call the control room.

Corrective Actions

Three actions are being undertaken as a result of the above findings --

1. Several speakers and speaker amplifiers will be added to the system. We are also investigating the possibility of adding visual annunciation in selected high noise areas.

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2. Our training and retraining program for plant and non-plant personnel will emphasize the fact that verbal announcements cannot always be understood. Also, upon hearing the evacuation siren, one should immediately move to an area where verbal announcements can be heard or call the control room.
3. The instructions to control room personnel will be modified so that, in the event of an evacuation, especially, the persons sounding the alarm and making the verbal announcements are aware that not everyone in the plant will be able to hear or understand the verbal messages. Therefore, the siren should be sounded for at least 15 seconds per minute for several minutes and the verbal announcement should be repeated several times. These instructions are to be contained in an appendix to the emergency plan.

It is anticipated that all new equipment can be installed within 60 days of receipt of the equipment except inaccessible areas which will be worked during the respective refueling outages or other extended outage.

Yours very truly,



L. J. Wachter

Vice President - Power Production
and System Operation

cc: Mr. G. Charnoff
NRC Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Washington, D.C. 20555

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