



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION III  
799 ROOSEVELT ROAD  
GLEN ELLYN, ILLINOIS 60137

November 1, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: D. Eisenhut, Director, Division of Licensing, NRR  
FROM: R. F. Warnick, Acting Director, Office of Special Cases  
SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION FOR NOTIFICATION OF LICENSING BOARD

Enclosed is a Preliminary Notification regarding the installation of undersized electrical cables at the Consumers Power Midland Site and a Consumers Power press release describing the same issue.

Region III has reviewed this information and perceives the issues identified in the enclosures to be material and relevant to the Midland OM/OL proceedings. We recommend that the Midland Licensing Board be notified.

Region III is presently waiting for the followup report (10 CFR 50.55(e)) which should provide additional details and engineering analysis. This report is expected by November 27, 1982.

*PSM*

If you have any questions or desire further information regarding this matter, please call me.

*BCD*

*R F Warnick*

R. F. Warnick, Acting Director  
Office of Special Cases

Enclosures: As stated

cc w/enclosures:

A. B. Davis  
R. N. Gardner  
R. B. Landsman  
R. J. Cook  
B. L. Burgess

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the staff on this date.

Facility: Consumers Power Company  
Midland Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2  
Docket No.: 50-329  
50-330  
Midland, MI 48640

Licensee Emergency Classification:  
\_\_\_\_ Notification of Unusual Event  
\_\_\_\_ Alert  
\_\_\_\_ Site Area Emergency  
\_\_\_\_ General Emergency  
\_\_\_\_ X Not Applicable

Subject: POTENTIAL 50.55(e) REPORT - IMPROPER CABLES

The licensee has reported a potential 50.55(e) to Region III (Chicago) involving the unauthorized substitution of Class 1E cables. To date, approximately 500 Class 1E cables have been reinspected by the licensee. Four of the 500 were below specified size. The four were 14 gauge cables instead of the required 10 gauge cables. These cables feed four decay heat cooldown and return isolation valves, which are safety-related.

The licensee is conducting the reinspection as required previously by Region III to resolve previous Class 1E cable misinstallations. The reinspection of Class 1E cables is continuing. The substituted cables were discovered when inspectors were told to read the cable jacket inscriptions to verify cable size instead of the attached cable tags. The licensee will issue a written report on the findings by November 27, 1982.

Some news media interest is expected. During the week of October 11, 1982, a Detroit television station broadcast a series of reports on construction deficiencies at Midland. One of the allegations in that series concerned unauthorized cable substitutions.

The licensee is preparing a news release. Region III (Chicago) will respond to inquiries.

The State of Michigan will be notified.

Region III was notified of the potential 50.55(e) at 11:30 a.m. (CDT) on October 28, 1982. This information is current as of 4:00 p.m. (CDT), October 28, 1982.

Contact: R. Gardner 384-2524  
W. Shafer 384-2656  
R. Warnick 384-2599

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# Consumers Power Company

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATTN. RON GARDNER  
RTII

MIDLAND, October 29, 1982 -- Consumers Power Company has reported to the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission that its quality assurance department engineers have identified four improperly installed electric cables at the Midland Nuclear Plant.

The cables were found during an additional inspection initiated by Consumers Power Company to verify that all installed safety-related cables conformed to design requirements. To date over 425 cables have been re-inspected. This inspection is only one of numerous inspections and tests now underway or planned. The ultimate objective is to certify and document that the plant has been properly constructed and is ready for operation, according to J W Cook, company vice president in charge of building the project.

The cables, which have been replaced, were installed in July and August 1981, but had not yet been energized. The four cables, containing about 600 feet of wiring, are part of the plant's 10-million-foot electrical system.

The specific error discovered in the four cables was the substitution of a smaller wire size, number 14-gauge conductor, rather than the number 10-gauge specified. The 10-gauge wire can transmit higher electrical current than the smaller wire size. All other cable characteristics; insulation voltage rating and thermal qualifications, number of conductors, shielding, were appropriate.

The improper cables lead to two motor operated valves in the plant's decay heat removal system, part of a backup safety system used to cool the nuclear reactor. "The 14-gauge wire would probably have done the job should it have ever been needed," said Cook, "but it would not have provided the safety margin that is designed into the circuit."

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He added that "Whether or not the wire would have performed the design function would have been fully demonstrated during the plant system's testing program scheduled to begin shortly and be completed prior to plant operation."

The discrepancy occurred when the cables were improperly marked after they were cut from larger reels in a separate building and sent into the plant to be installed. The inspection check which occurred after the original tagging did not identify the difference between the cable jacket markings and the tagging information.

The cables in question are among more than 9,000 safety-related cables that will be examined as part of this investigation of all safety-related cables installed at the Midland Plant. The investigation, which will take approximately six months to complete, is being done to verify that each cable is in fact the cable called for in the design and shown in the plant records. The company plans to periodically issue progress reports of the inspection program.

The investigation was organized following allegations of improper cable substitutions in some parts of the plant by an anonymous former worker. These charges were initially made last June, but no specific details have ever been provided to Consumers Power. However, recent media coverage provided enough detail so that an inspection plan could be generated, Cook stated.

Cook said utility officials have tried repeatedly over the past four months to obtain specific information on which to base an investigation.

"The company is committed to determine whether any allegations regarding the plant are valid and to correct any problems identified" he said. "The first results of our reinspection program are inconclusive regarding the allegation as we understand it, but as noted, the program has identified at least one cable package which contained erroneous cables."

Consumers Power has tried to obtain information from the self-styled whistle-blower organization, the Governmental Accountability Project, which initially publicized the charges last June, from the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission which was given affidavits but has not yet conducted its own investigation, and from news representatives who have seen the affidavits and have periodically over the past four months asked the company to respond to the charges.