

DMB

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: Northern States Power Co.
Monticello Nuclear Generating Station
Monticello, MN 55361

Licensee Emergency Classification:
 Notification of an Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

Docket No: 50-263

Subject: CONTROL ROD DRIVE - EXCESSIVE SCRAM TIMES (UPDATE)

Surveillance testing of control rod scram times on December 4, 1984, determined that the insertion times were excessive for 14 out of 15 rods tested. The insertion times were about 10 seconds for these rods, compared to the normal time of 2.5 seconds.

The plant has been shut down since February 3, 1984, for replacement of recirculation system piping.

The licensee had concluded that the excessive insertion times were caused by the plugging of screens in the control rod drive system by paper fibers. These paper fibers were from dissolvable paper seals which were used during welding on the recirculation system piping. Using the reactor water cleanup system, the licensee has now removed all particulate matter, and most of the paper fibers, from the reactor cooling system.

All 121 control rod drive mechanisms are being removed for cleaning and replacement of the screens which were clogging. Because a sufficient number of new screens are not available with the correct mesh size -- 10 mils -- the licensee is planning to relocate the screen position in some control rod drive units, permitting use of a smaller mesh size. (This modification has been made at other General Electric designed plants.) The licensee has also determined that 20 of the screens already replaced (without the position modification) are of the smaller 2 mil mesh size because of a shipping error by the supplier, General Electric. The licensee and General Electric are reviewing the mesh size issue to determine if these 20 need to be replaced.

The clogging problem and corrective actions are being reviewed by the Region III (Chicago) staff and the Resident Inspector. The licensee expects to complete the screen replacement and subsequent testing of the control rods by January 21, 1985.

The State of Minnesota will be informed of this updated information. This information is current as of 9 a.m., December 20, 1984.

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Rev. 07/06/84
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