

LED/DCB

December 27, 1996

Mr. E. Watzl
Vice President
Nuclear Generation
Northern States Power Company
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55401

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-282/96014, 50-306/96014
NOTICE OF VIOLATION.

Dear Mr. Watzl:

On November 19, 1996, the NRC completed an inspection at your Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection.

During the 6-week period covered by this inspection, your conduct of activities at the Prairie Island facilities was usually good. However, a concern with operator performance during surveillance activities was identified in the two most recent resident inspector reports. During this report period an additional operator error during surveillance activities was identified. This resulted in a violation of Technical Specifications. We remain concerned with this negative trend and request that your response to the violation include actions comprehensive enough to address the broad issue and not just the single event.

An additional violation of Technical Specifications was identified by the NRC when plant management misinterpreted the requirements and failed to test the redundant diesel generator when one diesel was declared inoperable due to a problem with the ventilation system. We are concerned with this issue because the Operations Committee, led by senior plant management, approved a nonconservative interpretation of the Technical Specifications action requirements.

The violations are cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation, and the circumstances surrounding the violations are described in detail in the enclosed report. Please note that you are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. The NRC will use your response, in part, to determine whether further enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR).

Sincerely,

/s/ J. L. Caldwell

James L. Caldwell, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-282, 50-306
License Nos: DPR-42, DPR-60

Enclosures: Notice of Violation
Inspection Report 50-282/96014, 50-306/96014

cc w/encls: Plant Manager, Prairie Island
John W. Ferman, Ph.D.,
Nuclear Engineer, MPCA
State Liaison Officer, State
of Minnesota
State Liaison Officer, State
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Tribal Council
Prairie Island Dakota Community

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