

January 22, 1999

Mr. Roger O. Anderson, Director
Nuclear Energy Engineering
Northern States Power Company
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55401

SUBJECT: PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT - EVALUATION OF
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ASME CODE ON
SURFACE EXAMINATION AND WELD OVERLAY OF CANOPY SEAL WELDS
FOR CONTROL ROD DRIVE MECHANISM (TAC NOS. MA4254 AND MA4255)

Dear Mr. Anderson:

By letter dated November 30, 1998, Northern States Power Company (NSP) proposed an alternative to the surface examination requirements of paragraph N-518.4 of the 1968 American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code for control rod drive mechanism canopy seal welds. In lieu of the liquid penetrant surface examination required by the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, the proposed alternative is to make weld repair/overlays using an automatic welding process with visual examinations of the weld area with a remote video camera and a post-outage system leakage test inspection. The proposed alternative would be used in the examination of one canopy seal weld repair and in the examinations of weld overlays applied on other non-repaired canopy seal welds.

The staff has reviewed the NSP's proposed alternative and concludes that the proposed alternative provides an acceptable level of quality and safety. Therefore, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i), the staff authorizes the use of the proposed alternative. The detailed results of the staff review are provided in the enclosed safety evaluation. If you have any questions concerning this action please call T. J. Kim of my staff at (301) 415-1392.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Cynthia A. Carpenter, Director
Project Directorate III-1
Division of Reactor Projects - III/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-282 and 50-306

Enclosure: Safety Evaluation

cc w/encl: See next page

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Mr. Roger O. Anderson, Director
Northern States Power Company

Prairie Island Nuclear Generating
Plant

cc:

J. E. Silberg, Esquire
Shaw, Pittman, Potts and Trowbridge
2200 N Street, N. W.
Washington DC 20037

Plant Manager
Prairie Island Nuclear Generating
Plant
Northern States Power Company
1717 Wakonade Drive East
Welch, Minnesota 55089

Adonis A. Neblett
Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
455 Minnesota Street
Suite 900
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2127

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Resident Inspector's Office
1719 Wakonade Drive East
Welch, Minnesota 55089-9642

Regional Administrator, Region III
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
801 Warrenville Road
Lisle, Illinois 60532-4351

Mr. Stephen Bloom, Administrator
Goodhue County Courthouse
Box 408
Red Wing, Minnesota 55066-0408

Kris Sanda, Commissioner
Department of Public Service
121 Seventh Place East
Suite 200
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2145

Site Licensing
Prairie Island Nuclear Generating
Plant
Northern States Power Company
1717 Wakonade Drive East
Welch, Minnesota 55089

Tribal Council
Prairie Island Indian Community
ATTN: Environmental Department
5636 Sturgeon Lake Road
Welch, Minnesota 55089