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SEP 18 1987

Docket No. 50-282
License No. DPR-42
EA 87-138

Northern States Power Company
ATTN: Mr. C. E. Larson
Vice President, Nuclear
Generation
International Centre Building
920 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF VIOLATION AND PROPOSED IMPOSITION OF CIVIL PENALTY
(NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-282/87011(DRP))

This refers to the inspection conducted during the period June 18 through July 2, 1987, at the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Unit 1. The inspection was conducted to review the circumstances that resulted in Unit 1 Safety Injection Pump (SI) No. 11 being inoperable for approximately 25 days. The problem was identified by your staff and was immediately reported to the NRC Senior Resident Inspector. The details of the events that led to the violation are presented in the subject inspection report that was sent to you on July 10, 1987. This matter was discussed on July 15, 1987, during an Enforcement Conference held in the NRC Region III office between Mr. James T. Howard, President and Chief Executive Officer, and others of your staff and Mr. A. B. Davis and others of the NRC staff. During the conference, we discussed the violation, the root causes, and your corrective actions.

The violation described in the Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalty resulted because of a failure to verify that a 4160 volt breaker that supplied power to the No. 11 SI pump was not in the "Connect" position. Personnel relied on an indicator light in the control room to verify that the breaker was closed. When plant personnel discovered the problem, an operator turned the racking screw and was able to correctly position the breaker.

During the enforcement conference, it was noted that your staff had previously identified 5 to 8 additional instances where breakers were improperly positioned in other than the "Connect" position. These involved both safety and nonsafety-related systems. The NRC is concerned that you did not aggressively pursue a more comprehensive and lasting corrective action after identifying these improperly positioned breakers and after reviewing NRC IE Information Notice No. 84-46, "Circuit Breaker Position Verification," dated June 13, 1984.

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To emphasize the importance of properly returning equipment to service and properly verifying that systems and components are operational, I have been authorized, after consultation with the Director, Office of Enforcement, and the Deputy Executive Director for Regional Operations, to issue the enclosed Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalty in the amount of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) for the violation described in the enclosed Notice. In accordance with the "General Statement of Policy and Procedures for NRC Enforcement Actions," 10 CFR Part 2, Appendix C (1987) (Enforcement Policy), the violation described in the enclosed Notice has been categorized at Severity Level III. The base value of a civil penalty for a Severity Level III violation is \$50,000. The NRC Enforcement Policy allows for reduction of a civil penalty under certain circumstances. In this case, the base civil penalty has been reduced by 50 percent because of your prompt identification and reporting and because of unusually prompt and extensive corrective actions. Further mitigation was not applied because prior notice of similar events was available based on the previous incidents at Prairie Island and the information given in I&E Information Notice 84-46.

You are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. In your response, you should document the specific actions taken and any additional actions you plan to prevent recurrence. After reviewing your response to this Notice, including your proposed corrective actions and the results of future inspections, the NRC will determine whether further NRC enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with NRC regulatory requirements.

In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," Part 2, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

The responses directed by this letter and the enclosed Notice are not subject to the clearance procedures of the Office of Management and Budget as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, Pub. L. No. 95-511.

Sincerely,
Original signed by
A. Bert Davis

A. Bert Davis
Regional Administrator

Enclosures:

1. Notice of Violation and
Proposed Imposition of
Civil Penalty
2. Inspection Report
No. 50-282/87011(DRP)

See Attached Distribution

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cc w/enclosures:

E. L. Watzl, Plant Manager

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