

**From:** Eric Meyer <eric@generationatomic.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 11:35 AM  
**To:** MonticelloEnvironmental Resource  
**Cc:** Joe spartz; Philip Hult  
**Subject:** [External\_Sender] Support for 20-Year License Extension for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant

Dear Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

We are writing on behalf of Generation Atomic to express our strong support for the 20-year license extension of Xcel Energy's Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant in Minnesota. After thoroughly reviewing the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and considering the plant's overall performance, we firmly believe that renewing Monticello's operating license is crucial for achieving Minnesota's ambitious climate goals and ensuring a reliable, affordable, and clean energy future for the state.

The draft EIS unequivocally demonstrates that subsequent license renewal (SLR) is the environmentally preferred alternative for meeting Minnesota's energy needs. Monticello is a critical asset, working with Prairie Island to provide nearly half of the state's carbon-free electricity and playing an essential role in maintaining grid stability. The EIS also highlights that all other replacement power options, such as natural gas, wind, solar, and new nuclear, would have greater environmental impacts than SLR, not to mention the substantial challenges and costs associated with new construction.

We commend Xcel Energy for its strong safety record and ongoing investments in maintenance, upgrades, and safety systems at Monticello. The plant's robust design and multiple layers of safety features have ensured its safe and reliable operation for decades. The NRC's rigorous oversight and the plant's comprehensive environmental monitoring program have demonstrated that Monticello has had no significant adverse impact on the surrounding environment.

While we acknowledge the concerns raised by the recent tritiated water leak announced in 2023, we believe it is important to put this incident into proper context. The leak, which has been repaired and extensively monitored, poses zero risk to public health and the environment. The radiological impact of the leaked water is comparable to the natural background radiation levels we encounter in our daily lives. Furthermore, the NRC's and MNPUC's ongoing oversight and Xcel Energy's prompt response and transparent communication regarding the leak demonstrate their commitment to safety and public trust.

Looking forward, we believe that granting Monticello a 20-year license extension is the most prudent and responsible course of action. This decision would provide the regulatory certainty needed for Xcel Energy to continue making long-term investments in the plant's safety, reliability, and performance. It would also send a clear signal to other nuclear operators and the industry as a whole that the NRC recognizes the vital role that existing nuclear plants play in our nation's clean energy transition.

Moreover, extending Monticello's operation is a cornerstone in enabling Xcel to achieve state mandated goals of 100% clean electricity by 2040. Attempting to replace Monticello's around-the-clock clean generation with renewable sources that have high seasonal variability, such as wind and solar, would require a massive and costly buildout those technologies along with substantial investments in energy storage and grid infrastructure. It would also likely lead to

increased reliance on fossil fuels, particularly natural gas in the near term, undermining efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In conclusion, we are confident that with the NRC's robust oversight and Xcel Energy's commitment to safety and transparency, Monticello can continue to provide reliable, carbon-free energy for another 20 years.

Thank you for considering our comments and support.

Sincerely,

Eric Meyer  
Executive Director  
Generation Atomic

Philip Hult  
Development Director  
Generation Atomic

Joe Spartz  
MN Legislative Team Volunteer Lead  
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**From:** Eric Meyer

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Tracking Status: None

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