

MAR 5 1973

Docket No. 50-263

Northern States Power Company
ATTN: Mr. L. O. Mayer
Director of Nuclear Support
Services
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401

Gentlemen:

We have reviewed your request dated February 20, 1973, for authorization to operate the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant Unit 1, authorized by Provisional Operating License No. DPR-22, with Reload 1 fuel bundles in the core. According to your plan, twenty-eight Reload 1 fuel bundles will replace an equal number of the initial Monticello fuel bundles during the March-April 1973 refueling outage when the average fuel exposure will have reached approximately 6800 MWd/t. The Reload 1 fuel will have an average U-235 enrichment of 2.30%, slightly higher than the original fuel bundle average enrichment, and will contain gadolinium that is uniformly disbursed axially in three of the fuel rods in each bundle for supplementary reactivity control. Sixty-four of the original 216 temporary fixed poison curtains will be retained in the core to supplement reactivity control by the control rods.

Based on the information you have provided, we have determined that the proposed Reload 1 fuel bundles for Monticello are identical in all important aspects to those for other nuclear power plants that we have reviewed and approved. We have concluded that the first partial refueling of the Monticello core with Reload 1 fuel bundles containing gadolinium does not involve an unreviewed safety question or a change to the Technical Specifications. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 50.59 (a) of 10 CFR Part 50, you may refuel with Reload 1 fuel bundles as you have described in your letter of February 20, 1973.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by
D. J. Skovholt

Donald J. Skovholt
Assistant Director for
Operating Reactors
Directorate of Licensing

DS

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| OFFICE ▶ | | | | | | |
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| DATE ▶ | | | | | | |

MAR 5 1973

cc: Gerald Charnoff
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 Washington, D. C. 20006

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