



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

February 20, 1973

Files (Docket No. 50-263)

THRU: D. L. Ziemann, Chief, ORB #2, L

D.L. Ziemann
MONTICELLO - CHANGE TO ALLOW 50 GRAMS OF U-235 FOR FISSION CHAMBERS
INSTEAD OF ONE GRAM (NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY)

By letter dated February 5, 1973, Northern States Power Company (NSP) proposed an amendment to Provisional Operating License No. DPR-22 for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. The proposed amendment would permit the receipt, possession, and use of up to 50 grams of U-235 contained in fission chambers for use during refueling outages. The proposed amendment will not affect normal reactor operations since the large fission chambers (dunkers) can be inserted in empty fuel bundle positions only when the reactor vessel head and other upper reactor vessel internals are removed from the reactor vessel for fuel inspection or refueling purposes.

Up to six fission chambers, each containing 2 to 6 grams of U-235, may be inserted into the core or core periphery whenever improved neutron detection sensitivity is required during the refueling operations to demonstrate the required shutdown margins. All dunkers must be removed before reinstallation of the upper reactor vessel internals and reactor vessel head can be accomplished because of physical interference. The change is necessary because each of the large fission chambers contains more U-235 than all of the miniature fission chambers used for normal reactor control combined.

We have concluded that the proposed amendment does not involve significant hazard considerations not previously evaluated and that there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by the proposed activities.

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Memo