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ORB #2 Reading

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FLASH NOTE

Dennis L. Ziemann, Chief, Operating Reactors Branch #2, RL

MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT FUEL CLADDING FAILURE

PURPOSE

To advise Management of recent information obtained from examination of irradiated 7 x 7 fuel assemblies presently stored in the Monticello facility spent fuel pool. The Monticello Nuclear Generating Facility is owned and operated by the Northern States Power Company (NSP).

CHRONOLOGY

1. On June 30, 1975, the Office of Inspection and Enforcement Headquarters personnel alerted us of a recent examination of Monticello irradiated 7 x 7 fuel assemblies which revealed significant failure of the fuel cladding.
2. Upon receipt of the above information, I called Mr. Ned Choules (Region III) and he gave me the following information:
 - a. Ten irradiated 7 x 7 fuel assemblies, three of which were removed in March 1974 and the remaining seven in January 1975, were examined by use of a television camera.
 - b. The examination revealed 30 of the 40 corner fuel pins had cracks ranging from 1" to 3' in length. Some crack propagations were of spiral configuration with one fuel pin having a 1/4" wide crack. Fuel pins other than the corner pins had only minor defects.
3. I discussed the above matter with Technical Review personnel and a meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. July 1 with the Core Performance Branch to further discuss this topic. The principal concern is whether a generic problem may exist since the fuel pin failure was primarily confined to the corner fuel pins. (There are 268 7 x 7 fuel assemblies of identical design presently installed in the Monticello core which are scheduled to be replaced by 8 x 8 fuel assemblies in October 1975.)

FOLLOW-UP ACTION

A conference call has been scheduled for 2:30 p.m. July 1 to discuss this matter further with NSP. Two members from the Core Performance Branch will visit the Monticello facility to examine the irradiated fuel and participate in further discussions, as appropriate. Management will be kept advised of any significant developments on this subject.

original signed by

B. C. Buckley

JUL 01 1975

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DATE →	7/1/75		Division of Reactor Licensing	

Dennis L. Ziemann

- 2 -

July 1, 1975

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