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NRC RENEWS OPERATING LICENSE FOR PALISADES NUCLEAR POWER PLANT FOR AN ADDITIONAL 20 YEARS

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The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the operating license of the Palisades Nuclear Plant for an additional 20 years.

The Palisades plant is located 5 miles south of South Haven, Mich. The licensee, Nuclear Management Co., submitted its license renewal application March 22, 2005. With the renewal, the license is extended until March 24, 2031.

The NRC's environmental review for this license renewal is described in a site-specific supplement to the NRC's "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants" (NUREG-1437, Supplement 27), issued last October. The review concluded there were no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the license for environmental reasons. Public meetings to discuss the environmental review were held near the plant July 28, 2005, and April 5, 2006.

After carefully reviewing the plant's safety systems and specifications, the staff concluded that there were no safety concerns that would preclude license renewal, because the licensee had demonstrated the capability to manage the effects of plant aging. The "Safety Evaluation Report Related to the License Renewal of the Palisades Nuclear Plant" was published last September. In addition, NRC conducted inspections of the plant to verify information submitted by the licensee. The reports relating to the Palisades renewal are available on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/palisades.html>.

On Nov. 17, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards - an independent body of technical experts which advises the Commission - issued its recommendation that the operating license for Palisades be renewed. That recommendation is contained in "Report on the Safety Aspects of the License Renewal Application for the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant." This document is available on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acrs/letters/2006/>.

The Palisades renewal brings the total number of operating license renewals to 48 reactor units. A complete listing of renewal applications can be found on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html>.

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