



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS CHANGE

SUMMARY

Report:	Xcel Energy Hydroelectric Plant Penstock Fire
Recommendation Number:	2008-01-I-CO-R11
Date Issued:	August 23, 2010
Recipient:	Xcel Energy, Inc.
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Action
Date of Status Change:	March 1, 2017

Recommendation Text:

Report key findings, causes and recommendations of the CSB report to Xcel shareholders so that the owners of Xcel are fully informed of the report contents and how Xcel intends to prevent a similar accident in the future.

Board Status Change Decision:

A. Rationale for Recommendation

On October 2, 2007, five contract workers were killed and three others were injured when a flash fire erupted inside a drained penstock at the Xcel Energy, Inc. Cabin Creek hydroelectric power plant in Georgetown, Colorado. The fire, which trapped the fatally injured workers deep underground, resulted from the ignition of methyl ethyl ketone; a flammable solvent being used by the workers to clean spraying equipment. The spraying equipment was unsuccessfully employed by the workers to apply a protective epoxy coating to the interior walls of the penstock. Attempts made by local volunteer firefighters to rescue the trapped workers were unsuccessful.

As a part of its investigation, the CSB examined Xcel Energy's contractor procurement and safety oversight policies, incident investigation policies, and confined space entry program. The CSB also noted that while Xcel did an internal investigation of the Cabin Creek incident, the CSB's key findings, causes, and recommendations were not provided to Xcel shareholders. The Board therefore issued a recommendation to Xcel to remedy this situation. This status change summary only addresses the recommendation pertaining to Xcel shareholder reporting requirements (2008-01-I-CO-R11).

B. Response to the Recommendation

Xcel Energy posted on its website (www.xcelenergy.com) a web page entitled: "Cabin Creek Hydroelectric Plant Investigation Report." A review of that web page revealed that it contained a functioning link to the CSB's Xcel investigation report that allowed Xcel shareholders as well as the general public at large to access the key findings, causes, recommendations, and otherwise fully inform themselves concerning the details of this incident. The web page also contained a bulleted list summarizing the changes that Xcel Energy made to its safety program policies and procedures "to avoid further accidents such as that which took place at Cabin Creek." The changes listed were:

- Updating our Confined and Enclosed Space Entry Program
- Strengthening our Contractor Safety Program to exceed the best practices standards in the utility industry
- Implementing a Contractor Secondary Review Procedure; and
- Clarifying our Contractor Quality Assurance Assessment Guidelines

This information satisfied the remainder of the CSB recommendation.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

As the information contained on Xcel Energy's website page meets the intent of the recommendation, the Board voted to change the status of Recommendation No. 2008-01-I-CO-R11 to: "**Closed—Acceptable Action.**"