

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

#### *Alternatives to the Proposed Action*

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to this action would be to deny the requested amendments. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

#### *Alternative Use of Resources*

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of Catawba Nuclear Station Units 1 and 2," dated January 1983.

#### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on July 21, 1995, the NRC staff consulted with the South Carolina State official, Mr. V. Autrey of the Bureau of Radiological Health, Department of Health and Environmental Controls, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

#### **Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed license amendments.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's letter dated September 19, 1994, as supplemented by letters dated April 26 and June 19, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 15th day of August 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Herbert N. Berkow,**

*Director, Project Directorate II-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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#### **[Docket No. 50-424]**

#### **Georgia Power Company, et al.; Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 1 Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Facility Operating License No. NPF-68, issued to Georgia Power Company, et al. (the licensee) for operation of the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (Vogtle), Unit 1, located at the licensee's site in Burke County, Georgia.

#### **Environmental Assessment**

##### *Identification of Proposed Action*

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to the licensee's application dated May 12, 1995, as supplemented by letter dated July 6, 1995. The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Paragraph III.D.1.(a), to the extent that a one-time extension of approximately 18 months would permit rescheduling the third containment integrated leak rate test (ILRT) from the March 1996 refueling outage to the September 1997 refueling outage. The requirement of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Section IV.A, to perform a Type A test following any major modification to the primary containment boundary will be maintained. No such modifications have been made to the containment since the last Type A test in 1993, nor are any planned during the March 1996 refueling outage.

##### *The Need for the Proposed Action*

The proposed action is needed to permit the licensee to defer the Type A ILRT from the spring 1996 refueling outage to the September 1997 refueling outage, thereby saving the cost of performing the test and eliminating the test from the 1996 outage.

##### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and

concludes that the proposed one-time exemption would not increase the probability or consequences of accidents previously analyzed and would not affect facility radiation levels or facility radiological effluents. In accordance with Section III.D.1.(b) of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50, the licensee will continue to be required to conduct the Type B and C local leak rate tests, which historically have been shown to be the principal means of detecting containment leakage paths with the Type A tests confirming the Type B and C test results. In addition, even though the licensee would be exempt from the requirement to perform the Type A integrated leak rate test, they have committed to performing a general containment inspection as specified in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Section V.A if the requested exemption is granted. The NRC staff considers that these inspections, though limited in scope, provide an important added level of confidence in the continued integrity of the containment boundary. The change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

#### *Alternatives to the Proposed Action*

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed exemption, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to this action would be to deny the request for exemption. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

#### *Alternative Use of Resources*

This action did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant.

*Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on July 5, 1995, the staff consulted with the Georgia State official, Mr. James Hardeman of the Environmental Protection Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The state official had no comments.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's letters dated May 12, 1995, and July 6, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Burke County Library, 412 Fourth Street, Waynesboro, Georgia.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 21st day of August 1995.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Herbert N. Berkow,**

*Director, Project Directorate II-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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[Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414]

**Duke Power Company, et al.; Catawba Nuclear Station, Unit Nos. 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-35 and NPF-52, issued to Duke Power Company, et al. (the licensee), for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, located in York County, South Carolina.

**Environmental Assessment***Identification of the Proposed Action*

The proposed action would revise Technical Specification (TS) 5.3.1 "Fuel Assemblies" to (a) allow an increase in the maximum specified enrichment for fuel assemblies from a nominal value of 4.0 to 5.0 weight percent Uranium-235, and (b) provide flexibility in the repair of fuel assemblies containing damaged

and leaking fuel rods by reconstituting the assemblies in accordance with the guidance in Generic Letter 90-02, Supplement 1, "Alternative Requirements For Fuel Assemblies In The Design Features Section of Technical Specifications." The application is also generally consistent with the format and content of the improved Standard TS for Westinghouse plants provided in NUREG-1431, "Standard Technical Specifications Westinghouse Plants."

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendments dated June 17, 1993, as supplemented by letter dated July 5, 1995.

*The Need for the Proposed Action*

The proposed action is needed so that the licensee can use higher fuel enrichment to provide additional flexibility in the licensee's reload design efforts and to provide flexibility in the reconstitution of fuel assemblies that are found to be leaking or are determined to be probable sources of future leakage.

*Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed revisions to the TS. The proposed revisions would permit storage of fuel enriched to a nominal 5.0 weight percent Uranium-235. The safety considerations associated with storing new and spent fuel of a higher enrichment have been evaluated by the NRC staff. The staff has concluded that such changes would not adversely affect plant safety. The proposed changes have no adverse effect on the probability of any accident. No changes are being made in the types or amounts of any radiological effluents that may be released offsite. There is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure.

The environmental impacts of transportation resulting from the use of higher enrichment fuel and extended irradiation were published and discussed in the staff assessment entitled, "NRC Assessment of the Environmental Effects of Transportation Resulting from Extended Fuel Enrichment and Irradiation," dated July 7, 1988, and published in the **Federal Register** (53 FR 30355) on August 11, 1988, as corrected on August 24, 1988 (53 FR 32322), in connection with Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1: Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact. As indicated therein, the environmental cost contributions of the proposed increase in the fuel enrichment and

irradiation limits are either unchanged or may, in fact, be reduced from those summarized in Table S-4 as set forth in 10 CFR 51.52(c). Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed amendments.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

*Alternatives to the Proposed Action*

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to this action would be to deny the requested amendments. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

*Alternative Use of Resources*

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of Catawba Nuclear Station Units 1 and 2," dated January 1983.

*Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on July 21, 1995, the NRC staff consulted with the South Carolina State official, Mr. V. Autrey of the Bureau of Radiological Health, Department of Health and Environmental Controls, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed license amendments.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's letter dated June 17, 1993, as supplemented by letter dated July 5, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local