

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
John W.N. Hickey,
*Chief, Low-Level Waste and Decommissioning
Projects Branch, Division of Waste
Management Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards.*
[FR Doc. 97-6479 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]
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[Docket Nos. STN 50-528, STN 50-529, and
STN 50-530]

**Arizona Public Service Company; Palo
Verde Nuclear Generating Station,
Units Nos. 1, 2, and 3 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-41, NPF-51, and NPF-74, issued to Arizona Public Service Company (the licensee), for operation of the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, Unit Nos. 1, 2, and 3, located in Maricopa County, Arizona.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would modify the licenses for Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS), Unit Nos. 1, 2, and 3, to authorize incorporation in the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) a revised large-break loss-of-coolant accident (LBLOCA) analysis. The revised LBLOCA analysis addresses a previously unanalyzed release path through the steam generators to the atmosphere.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated May 2, 1995, as supplemented by letter March 7, 1996.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action would permit the UFSAR to be revised to address a previously unanalyzed release path through the steam generators to the atmosphere for the LBLOCA. This would incorporate this release path into the licensing basis of the facility.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there are no significant environmental considerations involved with the proposed action. The incorporation in the UFSAR for PVNGS Unit Nos. 1, 2, and 3 of the previously unanalyzed release path in the LBLOCA does not affect the design or operation of the plant, does not involve any modifications to the plant or any increase in the licensed power for the

plant, does not affect plant effluents, does not increase the probability of any postulated accident and will not create a new accident, and does not create any new or unreviewed environmental impacts that were not considered in the Final Environmental Statement (FES).

The FES did not consider in its evaluation of a LBLOCA, the leakage of containment atmosphere through the steam generators and to the public. Assessment of environmental impacts of the LBLOCA accounted for radiological releases from the containment and emergency core cooling system into the environment. For the revised analysis of the LBLOCA, atmospheric releases through the steam generators could be considered part of the leakage of containment atmosphere into the environment, although the location of release is different. The FES analyzed radiological releases from the steam generators to the environment in the evaluation of the steam generator tube rupture accident. Thus, the FES evaluated releases to the environment from steam generators, but this release pathway was not included in the LBLOCA analysis. The revised LBLOCA analysis does not significantly increase the environmental impacts of postulated accidents which are discussed in Section 5.9.2 of the FES, and is of no measurable environmental impact.

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. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1, 2, and 3," dated February 1982.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 7, 1997, the staff consulted with the Arizona State official, Mr. William Wright of the Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency, 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 action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated May 2, 1995, as supplemented by letter dated March 7, 1996, which is 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 Phoenix Public Library, 1221 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85004.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of March 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
James W. Clifford,

*Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate
IV-2, Division of Reactor Projects—III/IV,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 97-6481 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]

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[Docket No. 50-271]

**Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power
Corporation; Vermont Yankee Nuclear
Power Station; Environmental
Assessment and Finding of No
Significant Impact**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption for Facility Operating License No. DPR-28, issued to Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (the facility) located in Windham County, Vermont.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Actions

The proposed exemption would grant relief in certain outdoor areas of the protected area of the facility to allow use of security lighting for outdoor access and egress and the performance of one specified task in either of two locations for compliance with Section III.J of Appendix R to 10 CFR part 50. The exemption would include outdoor portions of the protected area for access and egress and for supply of nitrogen from either of two outdoor locations: (1) the 15,000 gallon liquid nitrogen containment inerting tank located outdoors, east of the reactor building, or (2) nitrogen storage bottles located on the west wall of the reactor building equipment air lock.

The proposed exemption is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated June 17, 1996.

The Need for the Proposed Actions

The need for this action arises for certain Appendix R fire scenarios whose safe shutdown strategy does not immediately depressurize the reactor and uses low pressure injections systems, and thus requires the safety relief valves (SRVs) to be actuated multiple times during a cooldown. Although each SRV accumulator has capacity for at least five valve strokes, a long term source of nitrogen, beyond the capacity of the SRV accumulators is required in order to provide for additional valve strokes for some scenarios. The nitrogen may be provided from either of two nitrogen storage locations.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Actions

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed exemption and concludes that the proposed exemption will provide sufficient fire protection that there is no increase in the risk of fires at the facility. Consequently, the probability of fires has not been increased and the post-fire radiological releases will not be greater than previously determined, nor does the proposed exemption otherwise affect radiological plant effluents.

The proposed exemption affects only the source of illumination credited for safe shutdown functions. No physical change results from the proposed exemption, and, as discussed above, the probability of fires has not been increased. Therefore, 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 actions.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed actions involve features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR part 20. They do not affect nonradiological plant effluents and have no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed actions.

Alternatives to the Proposed Actions

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed actions, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed actions, the staff considered denial of the proposed actions. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed actions and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

These actions do not involve use of resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on February 26, 1997, the staff consulted with the Vermont State official, Mr. William K. Sherman of the Vermont Department of Public Service, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed actions. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed actions 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 the proposed actions, see the application dated June 17, 1996, which is 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 Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 5th day of March 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Patrick D. Milano,
*Acting Director, Project Directorate I-3,
Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of
Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 97-6482 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]

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Core Research Capabilities for the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research; Meeting

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: NRC staff and industry will discuss the core research capabilities of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

DATES: March 25, 1997, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Room O-1F7/9, One White Flint North (OWFN) Building, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Lloyd Donnelly, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington DC 20555 Telephone (301) 415-5828.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the core research capabilities of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research in order for this office to continue active participation in cooperative safety research activities with other government agencies including DOE, industry, and international organizations concerned with nuclear reactor safety.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of March 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
David L. Morrison,
*Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory
Research.*

[FR Doc. 97-6477 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]

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[Docket Nos. 50-498 and 50-499]

South Texas Project; Local Public Document Room

Notice is hereby given that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will not be relocating the local public document room (LPDR) for records pertaining to Houston Lighting and Power Company's South Texas Project. The LPDR will remain at the J.M. Hodges Library, Wharton County Junior College, 911 Boling Highway, Wharton, Texas. The Library Director has informed the NRC staff that they will continue with the maintenance and operation of the South Texas LPDR.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of March 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Russell A. Powell,
*Chief, Freedom of Information/Local Public
Document Room Branch, Office of
Information Resources Management.*

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