

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-354]

Public Service Electric & Gas Company; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendment to Facility Operating License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Public Service Electric and Gas Company (the licensee) to withdraw its application dated August 26, 1997, as supplemented April 24, 1998, and September 24, 1998, for proposed amendment to Facility Operating License No. NPF-57 for the Hope Creek Generating Station, located in Salem County, New Jersey.

The proposed amendment would have revised Technical Specification (TS) 4.6.5.3.1.b, for the Filtration, Recirculation and Ventilation System (FRVS) Ventilation Subsystem, and TS 4.6.5.3.2.b for the FRVS Recirculation Subsystem. The revisions would have allowed the FRVS heaters to be "operating (automatic heater modulation to maintain relative humidity)" instead of "on" when performing the 10-hour monthly surveillance test.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on October 8, 1997 (62 FR 52587). However, by letter dated December 21, 1998, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated August 26, 1997, as supplemented April 24, 1998, and September 24, 1998, and the licensee's letter dated December 21, 1998, which withdrew the application for license amendment. The above documents 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 Pennsville Public Library, 190 S. Broadway, Pennsville, NJ, 08070.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of December 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Richard B. Ennis,

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

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 030-34318, License No. 06-30361-01, EA 98-521]

Special Testing Laboratories, Inc., P.O. Box 200, Bethel, Connecticut 06801-0200; Order Suspending License (Effective Immediately)

I

Special Testing Laboratories, Inc. (Special Testing or Licensee) is the holder of Byproduct Nuclear Material License No. 06-30361-01 issued by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or Commission) pursuant to 10 CFR Part 30. The license authorizes possession and use of Troxler Electronics Laboratories, Campbell Pacific Nuclear, Humbolt Scientific, Seamen Nuclear, or Soiltest nuclear gauges. Mr. Richard Speciale (Mr. Speciale) is the President and Radiation Safety Officer of Special Testing Laboratories. The license was issued on August 6, 1997, and is due to expire on August 31, 2007.

License No. 06-19720-01 authorizing possession and use of portable nuclear density gauges was previously issued to Testwell Craig Laboratories of Connecticut, Inc. (Testwell Craig), but was suspended on July 1, 1996, due to non-payment of fees. Mr. Speciale was also the President of Testwell Craig.

II

On October 14, 15, and 16, 1998, and November 9-10, 1998, an NRC Region I inspector, accompanied by an investigator from the NRC Office of Investigations, conducted an inspection at the Licensee's facility in Bethel, Connecticut. During the inspection, the NRC determined that: (1) portable gauges containing NRC-licensed material were routinely used by some Licensee employees who had not received the required training; (2) some Licensee employees were using the gauges without being provided the required personnel dosimeters; and (3) leak tests of the gauges were not being performed at the required frequency.

During the October inspection, Mr. Speciale was interviewed by the inspector and investigator. In that interview, Mr. Speciale, when questioned concerning the scope of the Licensee's program, informed the NRC

that the Licensee possessed four Troxler portable gauges that were used by three or four authorized users, including himself. He also stated that he did not believe any of his field technicians were operating gauges without training.

The NRC inspector and investigator returned to the facility on November 9-10, 1998, to complete the investigation, at which time the NRC was provided records indicating that nine individuals had received manufacturer's training on October 29, 1998, which was subsequent to the NRC's October 1998 visit. Mr. Speciale was questioned as to why nine individuals had received such training when he had previously stated that gauges were used by three or four users. Although Mr. Speciale initially maintained that only three individuals were using four gauges, he subsequently stated, and available records showed, that Speciale Testing possessed 13 gauges, and these gauges were used by as many as 14 individuals. Also, during the November inspection, seven gauge users stated that they used portable gauges without formal training for periods ranging from several weeks to four years prior to October 29, 1998. In addition, the NRC learned, based on discussions with Mr. Speciale, that there were periods when gauge users were not provided personnel dosimeters. Further, five gauge users stated that they operated portable gauges without wearing "film badges" for periods ranging from one to several months prior to October 1998. When questioned as to why individuals were using gauges without training or personnel dosimeters, Mr. Speciale indicated that the required training and dosimeters were not previously provided due to financial considerations, even though he continued to direct the individuals to use the gauges.

Based on this November review by the NRC, Mr. Speciale, during the October 1998 communications with the NRC regarding the review of gauges being used, the number of users, and the training of those users, provided information to the NRC that he knew at the time was not complete and accurate in all material respects.

Furthermore, during a subsequent interview with the OI investigator on November 19, 1998, Mr. Speciale also admitted that he "never stopped using nuclear gauges" after the Testwell Craig license was suspended for non-payment of fees and before the Special Testing license was issued. He stated that he failed to do so because Testwell Craig had "job commitments to finish."