

*Purpose of Meeting:* To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate proposals submitted to the Informal Science Education Program as part of the selection process for awards.

*Reason for Closing:* The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: December 13, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Manager Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-32849 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-M**

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## NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

### Special Emphasis Panel in Physics; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation announces the following meeting:

*Name:* Special Emphasis Panel in Physics (1208).

*Date/Time:* February 7-9, 2000, 8 am to 5 pm.

*Place:* National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd, Room 360, Arlington, VA 22230.

*Type of Meeting:* Closed.

*Contact Person:* Dr. Winston Roberts, Program Director for Nuclear Theory, Division of Physics, Rm 1015, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: (703) 306-1805.

*Purpose of Meeting:* To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate research proposals submitted to the Nuclear Theory Program as part of the selection process for awards.

*Reason for Closing:* The proposals being reviewed include information of proprietary nature, including technical information; financial data such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters that are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: December 13, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-32847 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-M**

## NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

### Special Emphasis Panel in Physics; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation announces the following meeting:

*Name:* Special Emphasis Panel in Physics (1208).

*Date/Time:* January 27-29, 2000 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Place:* National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Room 320, Arlington, VA 22230.

*Type of Meeting:* Closed.

*Contact Person:* Dr. Bradley D. Keister, Program Director for Nuclear Physics, Division of Physics, Rm 1015, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230. (703) 306-1891.

*Purpose of Meeting:* To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate research proposals submitted to the Nuclear Physics Program as part of the selection process for awards.

*Reason for Closing:* The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individuals associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: December 13, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-32846 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-M**

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## NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

### Special Emphasis Panel in Undergraduate Education; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation announces the following meeting:

*Name:* Special Emphasis Panel in Undergraduate Education (1214).

*Date and Time:* January 10-12, 2000; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Place:* Rooms 320 and 330, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230.

*Type of Meeting:* Closed.

*Contact Person:* Drs. Gordon Uno and Joan Prival, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 835, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: (703) 306-1667.

*Purpose of Meeting:* To provide advice and recommendations concerning proposals submitted to NSF for financial support.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate Arctic Social Science proposals as part of the selection process for awards.

*Reason for Closing:* The proposals being reviewed include information of a proprietary or confidential nature, including technical information; financial data, such as salaries; and personal information concerning individual associated with the proposals. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (4) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: December 13, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-32848 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-M**

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[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 (NRC) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-28, issued to Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation, (the licensee), for operation of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (Vermont Yankee), located in Windham County, Vermont.

#### Environmental Assessment

##### Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would modify the spent fuel pool (SFP) by installation of additional rack modules. The additional rack modules will increase the Vermont Yankee SFP capacity from 2870 to 3353 fuel assemblies.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated September 4, 1998, as supplemented on February 8, April 16, August 26, September 16, and November 17, 1999.

##### The Need for the Proposed Action

Vermont Yankee currently has full-core discharge reserve storage capability in the SFP through the Spring 2001 refueling outage. Since there are no immediate options for the shipment of spent fuel to a permanent repository, the proposed action is required to maintain full-core reserve discharge capability to the SFP through the Fall 2008 refueling outage.

### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes there are no significant environmental impacts. The factors considered in this determination are discussed below.

#### Radioactive Waste Treatment

Vermont Yankee uses waste treatment systems designed to collect and process gaseous, liquid, and solid waste that might contain radioactive material. These radioactive waste treatment systems are evaluated in the Final Environmental Statement (FES) dated July 1972. The proposed SFP expansion will not involve any change in the waste treatment systems described in the FES.

#### Radioactive Material Released to the Atmosphere

The storage of additional spent fuel assemblies in the SFP is not expected to affect the releases of radioactive gases from the SFP. Gaseous fission products such as Krypton-85 and Iodine-131 are produced by the fuel in the core during reactor operation. A small percentage of these fission gases is released to the reactor coolant from the small number of fuel assemblies which are expected to develop leaks during reactor operation. During refueling operations, some of these fission products enter the SFP and are subsequently released into the air. Since the frequency of refuelings (and therefore the number of freshly offloaded spent fuel assemblies stored in the SFP at any one time) will not increase, there will be no increase in the amount of radioactive material released to the atmosphere as a result of the increased SFP fuel storage capacity.

The storage of additional fuel assemblies in the SFP will not increase the SFP bulk water temperature beyond the existing design temperature. Therefore, radioactive material airborne release rates due to evaporation from the SFP are not expected to increase.

#### Solid Radioactive Wastes

Spent resins are generated by the processing of SFP water through the SFP Purification System. The licensee does not expect the resin change-out frequency of the SFP purification system to be permanently increased as a result of the storage of additional spent fuel assemblies in the SFP. In order to maintain the SFP water as clean as possible, and thereby minimize the generation of spent resins, the licensee will vacuum the floor of the SFP to remove any radioactive crud and other debris before the new fuel rack modules are installed. The staff does not expect

that the additional fuel storage made available by the increased storage capacity will result in a significant change in the generation of solid radioactive waste.

#### Liquid Radioactive Wastes

The release of radioactive liquids will not be affected directly as a result of the modifications. The SFP ion exchanger resins remove soluble radioactive materials from the SFP water. When the resins are changed out, the small amount of resin sludge water which is released is processed by the radwaste system. As stated above, the licensee does not expect the resin change-out frequency of the SFP purification system to be permanently increased as a result of the storage of additional spent fuel assemblies in the SFP. The amount of radioactive liquid released to the environment as a result of the proposed SFP expansion is expected to be negligible.

#### Radiological Impact Assessment

The staff has reviewed the licensee's plan for the modification of Vermont Yankee spent fuel racks with respect to occupational radiation exposure. For this modification the licensee plans to add three new fuel rack modules to the SFP. A number of facilities have performed similar operations in the past. On the basis of the lessons learned from these operations, the licensee estimates that the proposed fuel rack installation can be performed for between 1.6 and 3 person-rem.

All of the operations involved in the fuel rack installation will utilize detailed procedures prepared with full consideration of ALARA (as low as reasonably achievable) principles. The Radiation Protection Department will prepare Radiation Work Permits (RWPs) for the various jobs associated with the SFP rack installation operation. These RWPs will instruct the project personnel in the areas of protective clothing, general dose rates, contamination levels (including potential exposure to hot particles), and dosimetry requirements. Each member of the project team will attend an ALARA Pre-Plan meeting and each team member will be required to attend daily pre-job briefings on the scope of the work to be performed. Personnel will wear protective clothing and will be required to wear personnel monitoring equipment including alarming dosimeters.

Since this license amendment does not involve the removal of any spent fuel racks, the licensee does not plan on using divers for this project. However, if it becomes necessary to utilize divers to remove any interferences which may

impede the installation of the new spent fuel racks, the licensee will equip each diver with radiation detectors with remote, above surface, readouts which will be continuously monitored by Radiation Protection personnel. The licensee will conduct radiation surveys of the diving area prior to each diving operation and following the movement of any irradiated hardware. In order to minimize diver dose, the licensee will use visual barriers (such as streamers fastened to rope, nets, or enclosure) as much as practical. The licensee will monitor and control personnel traffic and equipment movement in the SFP area to minimize contamination and to ensure that exposure is maintained ALARA.

On the basis of our review of the Vermont Yankee proposal, the staff concludes that the Vermont Yankee SFP rack modification can be performed in a manner that will ensure that doses to workers will be maintained ALARA. The projected dose for the project of 1.6 to 3 person-rem is in the range of doses for similar SFP modifications at other plants and is a small fraction of the annual collective dose accrued at Vermont Yankee.

#### *Accident Considerations*

On April 25, 1986, Vermont Yankee submitted an amendment request to increase the SFP capacity from 2000 to 2870. The staff approved that amendment request on May 20, 1988. The staff's safety evaluation supporting the issuance of that amendment concluded that the licensee's fuel handling accident dose analysis was acceptable. For this amendment request (3353 storage locations), the licensee concluded that analysis was still valid because no parameters of the analysis were affected by the increase in storage capacity. After reviewing the licensee's current submittal and the 1988 safety evaluation, the staff agrees with the licensee's conclusion. Because the proposed SFP modification at Vermont Yankee will not affect any of the assumptions or inputs used in evaluating the dose consequences of a fuel handling accident, it will not result in an increase in the doses from a postulated fuel handling accident.

#### *Conclusion*

The proposed action will not significantly 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 occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental

impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

#### *Alternatives to the Proposed Action*

As an alternative to increasing the spent fuel storage capacity at Vermont Yankee, the licensee considered shipment to another reactor site or away-from-reactor storage facility, e.g. shipment of spent fuel to a Federal fuel storage or disposal facility. This alternative was determined not to be feasible due to the unavailability of an offsite storage facility.

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the "no-action" alternative). 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 for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station.

#### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on December 13, 1999, the staff consulted with the Vermont State Official, William Sherman, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

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

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC 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 September 4, 1998, as supplemented on February 8, April 16, August 26, September 16, and November 17, 1999.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 14th day of December 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Richard P. Croteau,**

*Project Manager, Section 2, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 99-32881 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7590-01-P**

## **NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

### **Notice of Consideration of Amendment Request for Decommissioning the Fort McClellan Facility in Fort McClellan, Alabama, and Opportunity for a Hearing**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering issuance of a license amendment to Nuclear Materials License No. 01-02861-05, issued to the Department of the Army's Chemical School, to authorize decommissioning of a radioactive waste burial mound located at the Pelham Range at Fort McClellan, Alabama.

The licensee has been decommissioning the Chemical School radiological training facilities at Fort McClellan in accordance with the conditions discussed in License No. 01-02861-05. On September 9, 1999, the licensee submitted a decommissioning plan to NRC for review that summarized the activities that will be undertaken to remediate the radioactive waste burial mound located at the Pelham Range. The radioactive contamination consists of soil contaminated with byproduct material resulting from licensed activities that occurred from the late 1950s until the mid 1970s.

The NRC will require the licensee to remediate the Fort McClellan facility to meet NRC's decommissioning criteria, and during the decommissioning activities, to maintain effluents and doses within NRC requirements and as low as reasonably achievable.

Prior to approving the decommissioning plan, NRC will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and NRC's regulations. These findings will be documented in an Environmental Assessment. Approval of the decommissioning plan will be documented in an amendment to License No. 01-02861-05.

The NRC hereby provides notice that this is a proceeding on an application for amendment of a license falling within the scope of Subpart L "Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudication in Materials Licensing Proceedings," of

NRC's rules and practices for domestic licensing proceedings in 10 CFR Part 2. Pursuant to § 2.1205(a), any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing in accordance with § 2.1205(a). A request for hearing must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date of publication of this **Federal Register** notice.

The request for a hearing must be filed with the Office of the Secretary either:

1. By delivery to the Docketing and Service Branch of the Secretary at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852-2738; or
2. By mail or telegram addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555. Attention: Docketing and Service Branch.

In addition to meeting other applicable requirements of 10 CFR Part 2 of the NRC's regulations, a request for a hearing filed by a person other than the applicant must describe in detail:

1. The interest of the requester in the proceeding;
2. How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding, including the reasons why the requester should be permitted a hearing, with particular reference to the factors set out in § 2.1205(g); and
3. The requester's areas of concern about the licensing activity that is the subject matter of the proceeding; and
4. The circumstances establishing that the request for a hearing is timely in accordance with § 2.1205(c).

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.1205(e) each request for a hearing must also be served, by delivering it personally or by mail, to:

1. The applicant, U.S. Army Chemical School, ATTN: ATSN-CM, 401 Engineer Loop, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO 65473-8928, Attention: Commandant; and
2. The NRC staff, by delivery to the executive Director for Operations, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, or by mail, addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

For further details with respect to this action, the site decommissioning plan will be available for review on the NRC's Public Electronic Reading Room.

Dated at Atlanta, Georgia, this 7th day of December, 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Douglas M. Collins,**

*Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety.*

[FR Doc. 99-32880 Filed 12-17-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7590-01-P**