

20 days of its issuance. Where good cause is shown, consideration will be given to extend the time to request a hearing. A request for extension of time must be made in writing to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and include a statement of good cause for the extension. Any request for a hearing shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Chief, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Copies of the hearing request shall also be sent to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, to the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Hearings and Enforcement at the same address, to the Regional Administrator, NRC Region III, 801 Warrenville Road, Lisle, IL 60532-4351, and to David W. Jenkins, Esquire, Indiana Michigan Power Company, Nuclear Generation Group, One Cook Place, Bridgman, MI 49106, attorney for the licensee. If such a person requests a hearing, that person will set forth with particularity the manner in which his interest is adversely affected by this Order and will address the criteria set forth in 10 CFR 2.714(d).

If the hearing is requested by a person whose interest is adversely affected, the Commission will issue an Order designating the time and place of any hearing. If a hearing is held, the issue to be considered at such hearing will be whether this Confirmatory Order should be sustained.

In the absence of any request for hearing, or written approval of an extension of time in which to request a hearing, the provisions specified in Section IV above will be final 20 days from the date of this Order without further order or proceedings. If an extension of time for requesting a hearing has been approved, the provisions specified in Section IV will be final when the extension expires if a hearing request has not been received.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of February 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,
Samuel J. Collins,
Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-423]

Northeast Nuclear Energy Company, et al. (Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit 3); Order Approving Application Regarding Proposed Merger (Acquisition of CMP Group, Inc., by Energy East Corporation)

I

Northeast Nuclear Energy Company is authorized to act as agent for the joint owners of the Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit 3 (Millstone 3), and has exclusive responsibility and control over the physical construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility as reflected in Facility Operating License No. NPF-49. Central Maine Power Company (Central Maine), one of the joint owners, holds a 2.5-percent possessory interest in Millstone 3. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Facility Operating License No. NPF-49 on January 31, 1986, pursuant to Part 50 of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR Part 50). The facility is located in New London County, on the southern coast of the State of Connecticut.

II

By letter dated October 6, 1999, through counsel, Central Maine informed the NRC of a proposed merger involving the acquisition of Central Maine's parent, CMP Group, Inc. (CMP), by Energy East Corporation (Energy East). Central Maine requested that the NRC determine that the proposed merger and acquisition would not, in fact, constitute a transfer of Facility Operating License NPF-49 for Millstone 3, to the extent held by Central Maine in regard to Central Maine's 2.5-percent ownership interest in Millstone 3. Central Maine also requested if the NRC does find that the proposed acquisition of CMP would constitute an indirect transfer of Facility Operating License NPF-49 to the extent it is held by Central Maine, that the NRC consent to the indirect transfer of Central Maine's license to Energy East. The NRC determined that an indirect transfer of the license, to the extent that it is held by Central Maine, would be involved and that approval pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80 would be required. The NRC informed Central Maine of this decision in a letter dated November 15, 1999.

III

Central Maine is an electric utility primarily engaged in the transmission, sale, and distribution of electricity in

the State of Maine and is incorporated in Maine. CMP holds all the common stock of Central Maine and also is incorporated in the State of Maine. Energy East is an investor-owned holding company incorporated in New York. Through its subsidiaries, Energy East is an energy delivery, products, and services company with operations in New York and several other northeastern States.

According to Central Maine's October 6, 1999, submittal (the "application"), on June 14, 1999, CMP and Energy East signed a definitive merger agreement for the acquisition of CMP by Energy East. To accomplish the acquisition, EE Merger Corporation, a Maine corporation that is a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy East, will merge with and into CMP, with CMP being the surviving corporation. Upon completion of the merger, CMP will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy East, with Energy East acquiring all of CMP's common stock. CMP will continue its corporate existence under the laws of the State of Maine, and CMP will continue to own all of Central Maine's common stock. The application notes, however, that in the event that the Securities and Exchange Commission does not permit Energy East to maintain CMP as an intermediate holding company, Energy East plans to hold Central Maine directly.

Whether Central Maine becomes directly or indirectly held by Energy East, Central Maine will continue to hold and to be the licensee for its 2.5-percent ownership interest in Millstone 3. In the case of either direct or indirect ownership by Energy East, an indirect transfer of the license to the extent it is held by Central Maine will occur as a result of the merger.

Approval of the indirect license transfer was requested pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80. Notice of the application for approval and an opportunity for a hearing was published in the **Federal Register** on November 16, 1999 (64 FR 62230). No hearing requests or written comments were filed.

Under 10 CFR 50.80, no license, or any right thereunder, shall be transferred, directly or indirectly, through transfer of control of the license, unless the Commission shall give its consent in writing. Upon review of the information in the application and other information before the Commission, the NRC staff has determined that the subject merger will not affect the qualifications of Central Maine to hold the Millstone 3 license to the extent currently held, and that the indirect transfer of the license, to the extent effected by the proposed merger,

is otherwise consistent with applicable provisions of law, regulations, and orders issued by the Commission pursuant thereto, subject to the conditions set forth below. The foregoing findings are supported by a safety evaluation dated February 4, 2000.

IV

Accordingly, pursuant to Sections 161b, 161i, 161o, and 184 of the AEA, as amended, 42 USC §§ 2201(b), 2201(i), 2201(o), and 2234; and 10 CFR 50.80, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the license transfer referenced above is approved, subject to the following conditions:

(1) Central Maine shall provide the Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation a copy of any application, at the time it is filed, to transfer (excluding grants of security interests or liens) from Central Maine to its current or proposed direct or indirect parent or to any other affiliated company, facilities for the production, transmission, or distribution of electric energy having a depreciated book value exceeding 10 percent (10%) of Central Maine's consolidated net utility plant, as recorded on Central Maine's books of account.

The foregoing condition shall supersede Condition (1) of the Order dated June 2, 1998, which approved the application regarding the restructuring of Central Maine by establishment of a holding company.

(2) Should the proposed merger of CMP and Energy East not be completed by January 30, 2001, this Order shall become null and void, provided, however, on application and for good cause shown, such date may be extended.

This Order is effective upon issuance.

For further details with respect to this Order, see the application dated October 6, 1999, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and accessible electronically through the ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room link at the NRC Web site <http://www.nrc.gov>.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of February 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-263]

Northern States Power Company, Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant; Notice of Consideration of Approval of Transfer of Facility Operating License and Conforming Amendment, and Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering the issuance of an order under 10 CFR 50.80 approving the transfer of Facility Operating License No. DPR-22 for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant currently held by Northern States Power Company (NSP) as owner and licensed operator of Monticello. The transfer would be to a newly formed company (referred to herein as "New NSP"). The Commission is also considering amending the license for administrative purposes to reflect the proposed transfer.

By application dated October 29, 1999, the Commission was informed that NSP entered into an agreement on March 24, 1999, to merge with New Century Energies, Inc. (NCE). Under the agreement, NCE will be merged with and into NSP, which will be renamed Xcel Energy, Inc. (Xcel). At the time of the merger, NSP will transfer all of its existing electric and natural gas utility facilities and responsibility and control over operations to New NSP, which will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Xcel. New NSP would assume title to the facilities following approval of the proposed license transfer, and would become responsible for the operation, maintenance, and eventual decommissioning of Monticello. No physical changes to the facility or operational changes other than the transfer of operating authority to New NSP are being proposed in the application.

The proposed amendment would add a footnote to the license to reflect its transfer from NSP to the newly formed, wholly owned subsidiary.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.80, no license, or any right thereunder, shall be transferred, directly or indirectly, through transfer of control of the license, unless the Commission shall give its consent in writing. The Commission will approve an application for the transfer of a license, if the Commission determines that the proposed transferee is qualified to hold the license, and that the transfer is otherwise consistent with applicable provisions of law, regulations, and orders issued by the Commission pursuant thereto.

Before issuance of the proposed conforming license amendment, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's regulations.

As provided in 10 CFR 2.1315, unless otherwise determined by the Commission with regard to a specific application, the Commission has determined that any amendment to the license of a utilization facility which does no more than conform the license to reflect the transfer action involves no significant hazards consideration. No contrary determination has been made with respect to this specific license amendment application. In light of the generic determination reflected in 10 CFR 2.1315, no public comments with respect to significant hazards considerations are being solicited, notwithstanding the general comment procedures contained in 10 CFR 50.91.

The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene, and written comments with regard to the license transfer application, are discussed below.

By March 1, 2000, any person whose interest may be affected by the Commission's action on the application may request a hearing, and, if not the applicants, may petition for leave to intervene in a hearing proceeding on the Commission's action. Requests for a hearing and petitions for leave to intervene should be filed in accordance with the Commission's rules of practice set forth in Subpart M, "Public Notification, Availability of Documents and Records, Hearing Requests and Procedures for Hearings on License Transfer Applications," of 10 CFR Part 2. In particular, such requests and petitions must comply with the requirements set forth in 10 CFR 2.1306, and should address the considerations contained in 10 CFR 2.1308(a). Untimely requests and petitions may be denied, as provided in 10 CFR 2.1308(b), unless good cause for failure to file on time is established. In addition, an untimely request or petition should address the factors that the Commission will also consider, in reviewing untimely requests or petitions, set forth in 10 CFR 2.1308(b)(1)-(2).

Requests for a hearing and petitions for leave to intervene should be served upon Jay Silberg, Esq., counsel for NSP, at Shaw, Pittman, Potts, and Trowbridge, 2300 N Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 (tel: 202-663-8063; fax: 202-663-8007; e-mail: jay.silberg@shawpittman.com); and the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington,