

The meeting is open to the public.

Dated: November 8, 2000.

Mary Ann Hadyka,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-29106 Filed 11-14-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7515-01-U

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Meeting; Seminar: Research to Develop an Artificial Retina

November 22, 2000.

Name: Seminar: "RESEARCH TO DEVELOP AN ARTIFICIAL RETINA".

Date and Time: November 22, 2000; 8:30 am-12 noon.

Place: National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 110, Arlington, VA 22230.

Type of Meeting: Open.

Contact Person: Gilbert Devey, Program Director, biomedical Engineering and Research to Aid Persons with Disabilities, Division of Bioengineering and Environmental Systems, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 2223, Telephone: (703) 292-8320.

Purpose of Meeting: The broad purpose of the meeting is to brief NSF management and program officers on federal agency research project support, other worldwide R&D directed to the development of a chronic retinal prosthesis, and to indicate the context in which NSF provides support for the research.

AGENDA

8:30 a.m.—Registration
 9:00 a.m.—Welcome
 9:15 a.m.—Presentation
 10:15 a.m.—Break
 10:30 a.m.—Discussion
 11:30 a.m.—Open Discussion
 11:45 a.m.—Wrap-Up

Dated: November 8, 2000.

Karen J. York,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-29170 Filed 11-14-00; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-373, 50-374]

In the Matter of Commonwealth Edison Company (LaSalle County Station, Units 1 and 2); Exemption

I.

Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd, the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating Licenses Nos. NPF-

11 and NPF-18 for operation of LaSalle County Station, Units 1 and 2, located in LaSalle County, Illinois. The licenses state, among other things, that the facility is subject to all of the rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

II.

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) Part 50, Appendix G, requires that pressure-temperature (P-T) limits be established for reactor pressure vessels (RPVs) during normal operating and hydrostatic or leak rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G states, "The appropriate requirements on both the pressure-temperature limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions." Appendix G of 10 CFR Part 50 specifies that the P-T limits must meet the safety margin requirements specified in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (Code), Section XI, Appendix G. ASME Code specifies use of K_{1A} fracture toughness curve.

To address provisions of the proposed amendments to the technical specification (TS) P-T limits, in its submittal of February 29, 2000, the licensee requested that the staff exempt LaSalle from application of specific requirements of 10 CFR 50.60(a) and Appendix G, and substitute use of ASME Code Case N-640.

Code Case N-640 permits the use of an alternate reference fracture toughness (K_{1c} fracture toughness curve instead of K_{1A} fracture toughness curve) for reactor vessel materials in determining the P-T limits. Since the K_{1c} fracture toughness curve shown in ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix A, Figure A-2200-1 provides greater allowable fracture toughness than the corresponding K_{1A} fracture toughness curve of ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G, Figure G-2210-1 (the K_{1A} fracture toughness curve), using Code Case N-640 for establishing the P-T limits would be less conservative than the methodology currently endorsed by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G and, therefore, an exemption to apply the Code Case would be required.

Code Case N-640 (formerly Code Case N-626)

The licensee has proposed an exemption to allow the use of ASME Code Case N-640 in conjunction with ASME Code, Section XI; 10 CFR 50.60(a); and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, to determine P-T limits.

The proposed amendments to revise the P-T limits for LaSalle rely in part on

the requested exemption. These revised P-T limits have been developed using the K_{1c} fracture toughness curve, in lieu of the K_{1A} fracture toughness curve, as the lower bound for fracture toughness.

Use of the K_{1c} curve in determining the lower bound fracture toughness in the development of P-T operating limits curve is more technically correct than use of the K_{1A} curve since the rate of loading during a heatup or cooldown is slow and is more representative of a static condition than a dynamic condition. The K_{1c} curve appropriately implements the use of static initiation fracture toughness behavior to evaluate the controlled heatup and cooldown process of a reactor vessel. The staff has required use of the initial conservatism of the K_{1A} curve since 1974 when the curve was codified. This initial conservatism was necessary due to the limited knowledge of RPV materials. Since 1974, additional knowledge has been gained about RPV materials, which demonstrates that the lower bound on fracture toughness provided by the K_{1A} curve is well beyond the margin of safety required to protect the public health and safety from potential RPV failure. In addition, P-T curves based on the K_{1c} curve would enhance overall plant safety by opening the P-T operating window with the greatest safety benefit in the region of low temperature operations.

Since the reactor coolant system (RCS) P-T operating window is defined by the P-T operating and test limit curves developed in accordance with the ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G, continued operation of LaSalle with these P-T curves without the relief provided by ASME Code Case N-640 would unnecessarily require that the RPV maintain a temperature exceeding 212 degrees Fahrenheit in a limited operating window during pressure tests. Consequently, steam vapor hazards would continue to be one of the safety concerns for personnel conducting inspections in primary containment. Implementation of the proposed P-T curves, as allowed by ASME Code Case N-640, does not significantly reduce the margin of safety and would eliminate steam vapor hazards by allowing inspections in primary containment to be conducted at lower coolant temperature. Thus, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), the underlying purpose of the regulation will continue to be served.

In summary, the ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G, procedure was conservatively developed based on the level of knowledge existing in 1974 concerning RPV materials and the estimated effects of operation. Since