

for unrestricted use. The University of Minnesota has conducted surveys of the facilities and provided information to the NRC to demonstrate that the site meets the license criteria in Subpart E of 10 CFR Part 20 for unrestricted release.

The staff has prepared an EA in support of the proposed licensing action. The staff examined the University of Minnesota's request and the information that the licensee has provided in support of its request, including the surveys performed by University of Minnesota to demonstrate compliance with 10 CFR 20.1402, "Radiological Criteria for Unrestricted Use," to ensure that the NRC's decision is protective of the public health and safety and the environment. Based on its review, the staff has determined that the affected environment and the environmental impacts associated with the unrestricted use of the University of Minnesota's facilities are bounded by the impacts evaluated by the "Generic Environmental Impact Statement in Support of Rulemaking on Radiological Criteria for License Termination of NRC-Licensed Nuclear Facilities" (NUREG-1496). Additionally, no non-radiological impacts were identified.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the EA, summarized above, the staff has concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed action. Accordingly, the staff has determined that a FONSI is appropriate, and has determined that the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not warranted.

IV. Further Information

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," University of Minnesota's request, the EA summarized above, and the documents related to this proposed action are available electronically for public inspection and copying from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. These documents include University of Minnesota's letter dated September 11, 2003, with enclosures (Accession No. ML033230183); and the EA summarized above (Accession No. ML033280741).

Dated at Lisle, Illinois, this 2nd day of December 2003.

Christopher G. Miller,

Chief, Decommissioning Branch, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, RIII.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Draft Criteria for Determining Feasibility of Manual Actions To Achieve Post-Fire Safe Shutdown

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Extension of opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering a revision to the fire protection regulations in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, Paragraph III.G.2 to allow the use of manual actions by nuclear power plant operators to achieve hot shutdown conditions in the event of fires in certain areas provided the actions are evaluated against specific criteria and determined to be acceptable. For complying with the requirements of Appendix R, Paragraph III.G.2, licensees who rely on operator manual actions which have not been reviewed and approved by the NRC are generally considered to be in non-compliance. However, the NRC believes that manual actions relied upon by licensees are safe and effective if they meet appropriate acceptance criteria. Accordingly, until the fire protection regulations are revised, the NRC is planning to issue an interim enforcement policy to exercise enforcement discretion for non-compliant licensees if their manual actions meet the NRC's interim acceptance criteria. The NRC is seeking public comments on the adequacy and clarity of draft interim acceptance criteria. On November 26, 2003 (68 FR 66501), the NRC published its draft interim acceptance criteria in the **Federal Register**. The 30 day comment period established for these criteria was to have expired on December 26, 2003. In letters dated November 26 and December 2, 2003, the Nuclear Information and Resource Service and the Union of Concerned Scientists requested a 30 day extension to the comment period. The letters noted that the comment period included two major holidays and stated that the additional time was needed to research the issues and provide meaningful comments. Similar requests were made by many other members of the public. In view of

the importance of meaningful stakeholder input on these criteria, the NRC has decided to extend the comment period by 30 days.

DATES: The comment period has been extended and now expires on January 26, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T6-D59, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Comments may be submitted by e-mail to nrcprep@nrc.gov. Comments may be delivered to the NRC's headquarters at Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Dudley, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone (301) 415-1116, e-mail rfd@nrc.gov or Ray Gallucci, telephone (301) 415-1255, e-mail rhg@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of December, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Catherine Haney,

Program Director, Policy and Rulemaking Program, Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Required Interest Rate Assumption for Determining Variable-Rate Premium; Interest Assumptions for Multiemployer Plan Valuations Following Mass Withdrawal

AGENCY: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

ACTION: Notice of interest rates and assumptions.

SUMMARY: This notice informs the public of the interest rates and assumptions to be used under certain Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation regulations. These rates and assumptions are published elsewhere (or can be derived from rates published elsewhere), but are collected and published in this notice for the convenience of the public. Interest rates are also published on the PBGC's Web site (<http://www.pbgc.gov>).

DATES: The required interest rate for determining the variable-rate premium under part 4006 applies to premium payment years beginning in December 2003. The interest assumptions for