

safe-shutdown capability. On the basis of the NRC staff's evaluation above and contingent on the installation of additional fire detection capability (as the licensee committed to in its submittals of January 15, 1997, and May 16, 1997), the staff concluded that the detection and suppression capabilities for fire zones RB-1, RB-2, RB-3, and RB-4 are adequate to protect against the fire hazards in the zones. The staff concluded further that a postulated fire in reactor building fire zones RB-1, RB-2, RB-3, or RB-4 would not prevent the operators from achieving and maintaining safe shutdown. Therefore, contingent on the installation of the additional fire detection capability in fire zone RB-4, the staff concludes that an exemption should be granted from Section III.G.3 of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 for reactor building fire zones RB-1, RB-2, RB-3, and RB-4. Accordingly, the Commission has determined that pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), special circumstances exist for the licensee's requested exemption in that imposition of the literal requirements of the regulation in these particular circumstances is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50.

The underlying purpose of Section III.L of Appendix R is to provide alternative and dedicated shutdown capability necessary in areas in which the fire protection features cannot ensure safe-shutdown capability in the event of a fire in that area. On the basis of the technical evaluation contained in the appended BNL TER and the NRC staff evaluation of the Vermont Yankee fire protection capabilities, the staff concluded that the licensee's revised shutdown strategy for reactor building fire zones RB-1, RB-2, RB-3, and RB-4 (use of ADS with either LPCI or CS) and the redesignation of these fire zones as areas requiring an alternative shutdown capability provide an acceptable level of safe-shutdown protection. In addition, on the basis of the technical evaluation contained in the appended BNL TER, the staff concluded that the Vernon tie-line provides an acceptable alternative to power from an onsite emergency diesel generator when normal sources of offsite power are not available for (1) a fire in the control room or the cable spreading room that forces control room evacuation and (2) for a fire in reactor building fire zones RB-1, RB-2, RB-3, and RB-4 that requires the use of the alternative post-fire safe-shutdown strategy. Therefore, the staff concludes that exemptions should be granted for

Sections III.L.1(c), III.L.2.b, and III.L.3 of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50. Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), special circumstances exist in that the proposed exemptions to III.L.1(c), III.L.2.b and III.L.3 satisfy the underlying purpose of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 and that imposition of the literal requirements of the regulation in these particular circumstances is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50.

Further, the staff has concluded that the requested exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security. Therefore, contingent upon the addition of additional fire detection capability (as the licensee agreed to in its submittals of January 15, 1997 and May 16, 1997) by December 31, 1997, and contingent upon one continuous fire watch monitoring both fire zones RB-3 and RB-4 until installation of the additional fire detection capability, the Commission hereby grants the request for exemption from the requirements of Sections III.G.3, III.L.1(c), III.L.2.b, and III.L.3 of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 described in Section III above.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the issuance of this exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (62 FR 30356).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 12th day of August 1997.

For The Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Samuel J. Collins,**

*Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 97-21896 Filed 8-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-271]

### Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendment to Facility Operating License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (the licensee) to withdraw its application dated May 12, 1989, as supplemented October 22, 1993, and April 15, 1994, for proposed amendment to Facility

Operating License No. DRP-28 for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station located in Vernon, Vermont. The proposed amendment would have revised the Technical Specifications pertaining to the anticipated transient without scram rule (10 CFR 50.62).

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on June 28, 1989 (54 FR 27242). However, by letter dated July 25, 1997, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated May 12, 1989, as supplemented October 22, 1993, and April 15, 1994, and the licensee's letter dated July 25, 1997, 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 Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 12th day of August 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Kahtan N. Jabbour,**

*Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate I-3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 97-21899 Filed 8-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Texas License L03835]

### ProTechnics International, Inc.—Houston, Texas: Field Flood Tracer Study; Finding of No Significant Impact and Notice of Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering authorizing ProTechnics International, Inc. (ProTechnics) to conduct a field flood tracer study in an oil reservoir located at the NE Perry Unit, Noble County, Oklahoma near Stillwater, Oklahoma.

#### Environmental Assessment

##### Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is authorizing ProTechnics to conduct a field flood tracer study using cobalt-60 and hydrogen-3 in an oil reservoir located at the NE Perry Unit, Noble County, Oklahoma, near the town of Stillwater, Oklahoma. ProTechnics, with offices in Houston, Texas, is authorized by the

State of Texas, under Texas License L03835, to conduct field flood tracer activities in oil and gas reservoirs at temporary jobsites within that State. NRC's regulations in 10 CFR 150.20, "Reciprocity—Recognition of Agreement State Licenses," states, in part, "... any person holding a specific license from an Agreement State where the licensee maintains an office for directing the licensed activity, ... is hereby granted a general license to conduct the same activity in non-Agreement States ... Provided, That the specific license does not limit the activity authorized by [the] general license to specified installations or locations." Because the Texas license authorizes ProTechnics to use the requested radioisotopes in field flood tracer studies at temporary jobsites, ProTechnics qualifies for the general license. Paragraph (b) of 10 CFR Part 150.20 further states, "In addition, any person engaging in activities in non-Agreement States ... under the general license ... shall, ... before engaging in each such activity, file ... Form-241 (revised), 'Report of Proposed Activities in Non-Agreement States' ..." with NRC. ProTechnics met this requirement with a submission dated April 18, 1997.

On January 13, 1997 (62 FR 1662), NRC published a final rule in the **Federal Register** amending 10 CFR 150.20. The amendment, primarily intended to clarify requirements concerning activities conducted at areas of exclusive federal jurisdiction within Agreement States, also revised 10 CFR 150.20(b) to make clear that licensees operating pursuant to the rule must comply with all NRC regulations applicable to materials licensees. 10 CFR Part 51 specifies the environmental protection regulations applicable to NRC's licensing activities and implements section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Section 51.21 provides that all licensing actions require an environmental assessment except those identified in 10 CFR 51.20 as requiring an environmental impact statement or those identified in 10 CFR 51.22(c) as categorical exclusions. The use of radioactive tracers in field flood studies is not identified in either section. Therefore, an environmental assessment must be prepared. Paragraph 51.60(b)(1)(vi) requires that an applicant submit an environmental report with any request for use of radioactive tracers in field flood studies. ProTechnics submitted an environmental report in a letter dated May 27, 1997.

### *The Need for the Proposed Action*

The action is to determine if the licensee's request to perform activities under the general license should be approved or denied. Field flood tracer studies are conducted in conjunction with enhanced recovery of oil and natural gas, commonly referred to as enhanced oil recovery (EOR).

The oil from a producing well in a new reservoir initially flows because of the pressure exerted by water and gas in the reservoir. As oil production continues the reservoir pressure declines unless fluids are injected into the reservoir to maintain the pressure. The average recovery from primary production, with and without pressure maintenance, is 20 to 30 percent of the original oil in place. Oil production can be increased through a secondary recovery technique called waterflooding, which is the injection of water through injection wells to push the oil toward production wells. Further enhancements in oil production may occur with the use of so-called tertiary recovery methods in which steam, surfactants (soaps), or other compounds or gases are injected into the reservoir.

Radioactive tracers are used to define the movement of liquids or gases injected into an oil and gas reservoir to enhance recovery and to monitor reservoir performance. The water-soluble or gaseous tracer is introduced into a reservoir with the injected fluid. Both radioactive and nonradioactive tracers may be used. The tracer is placed in the injection well, where it is diluted and swept into the reservoir by injection liquid or gas. The diluted tracer is subsequently recovered at production wells and is monitored by sampling the recovered fluids.

In evaluating reservoir performance, it is desirable to determine the source of the injected fluid being collected at a production well. It is frequently desirable, therefore, to employ several tracers, using a different tracer in each of a number of injection wells.

### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

NRC published NUREG/CR-3467, "Environmental Assessment of the Use of Radionuclides as Tracers in the Enhanced Recovery of Oil and Gas" in November 1983. This generic environmental assessment (EA) evaluated the use of 16 different radioisotopes, used in certain activity ranges, as interwell tracers in field flooding for EOR operations. A typical operation using radioisotopes for interwell tracing was analyzed from the standpoint of three stages of operation:

aboveground, subsurface, and recovery and disposal. Doses to workers who handle radioactive tracers and to members of the public were estimated for normal and accidental exposure scenarios. For the two isotopes ProTechnics requested authorization to use, NUREG/CR-3467 analyzed the use of up to 300 millicuries of cobalt-60 and up to 30 curies of hydrogen-3. The ProTechnics submittal only requests authorization to use up to 23 millicuries of cobalt-60 and 2 curies of hydrogen-3, well within the bounds of the generic assessment. The NUREG estimated the national radiological impact on the use of radioisotopes as interwell tracers in EOR projects to be a collective dose equivalent of less than 16 man-rem/yr. Accidental exposures were estimated to contribute little to the total. The ProTechnics proposal, which only includes two radioisotopes and only a small percentage of the total activity evaluated in the NUREG for those two radioisotopes, will result in a lower collective dose equivalent.

### *Alternatives*

Denial of ProTechnics request is a possible alternative to the proposed action. This would avoid any of the environmental impacts associated with the use of radioactive tracers. However, the proposed action is nevertheless reasonable because its environmental impacts are so small and it will provide benefits such as assisting to meet U.S. energy needs.

### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

Ms. Pam Dewoody of the State of Oklahoma, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), was contacted on July 22, 1997, to discuss ProTechnics field flood tracer study reciprocity request and its potential environmental impacts. In a letter dated August 6, 1997, Ms. Dewoody indicated that the DEQ had no objections to the tracer study.

### *Conclusion*

The NRC staff concludes that the environmental impacts associated with ProTechnics proposed request to conduct a field flood tracer study using cobalt-60 and hydrogen-3 in an oil reservoir located at the NE Perry Unit, Noble County, Oklahoma, are expected to be insignificant.

### *Finding of No Significant Impact*

The Commission previously prepared an EA related to the use of certain quantities of radionuclides as tracers in field flood operations for the enhanced recovery of oil and gas. On the basis of the assessment, the Commission

concluded that environmental impacts that would be created by such actions would not be significant and do not warrant the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Because ProTechnics' request is within the bounds of that EA, it has been determined that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

The generic EA is made available as NUREG/CR-3467. Copies of NUREG/CR-3467 may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 37082, Washington, DC 20402-9328. Copies are also available from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. A copy and ProTechnics' submittal are also available for inspection and copying for a fee in the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW. (Lower Level), Washington, DC 20555-0001.

#### Opportunity for a Hearing

Any person whose interest may be affected by the approval of this action may file a request for a hearing. Any request for hearing must be filed with the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, within 30 days of the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**; be served on the NRC staff (Executive Director for Operations, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852), and on the licensee (ProTechnics International, Inc., 1160 Dairy Ashford, Suite 444, Houston, TX 77079); and must comply with the requirements for requesting a hearing set forth in the Commission's regulations, 10 CFR Part 2, Subpart L, "Information Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials Licensing Proceedings."

These requirements, which the request must address in detail, are:

1. The interest of the requestor in the proceeding;
2. How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding (including the reasons why the requestor should be permitted a hearing);
3. The requestor'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 hearing is timely—that is, filed within 30 days of the date of this notice.

In addressing how the requestor's interest may be affected by the proceeding, the request should describe the nature of the requestor's right under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, to be made a party to the

proceeding; the nature and extent of the requestor's property, financial, or other (i.e., health, safety) interest in the proceeding; and the possible effect of any order that may be entered in the proceeding upon the requestor's interest.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 11th day of August 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Larry W. Camper,**

*Chief, Medical, Academic, and Commercial Use Safety Branch, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.*

[FR Doc. 97-21900 Filed 8-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

#### Sunshine Act Meeting

**AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**DATE:** Weeks of August 18, 25, September 1, and 8, 1997.

**PLACE:** Commissioners' Conference Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

**STATUS:** Public and Closed.

**MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:**

#### Week of August 18

*Friday, August 22*

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (Public Meeting)

A: Louisiana Energy Services (Claiborne Enrichment Center); Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Partial Initial Decision (Resolving Contentions B and J.3), LBP-973 (Tentative)

#### Week of August 25—Tentative

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of August 25.

#### Week of September 1—Tentative

*Wednesday, September 3*

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (Public Meeting) (if needed)

#### Week of September 8—Tentative

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of September 8.

The schedule for Commission meetings is subject to change on short notice. To verify the status of meetings call (Recording)—(301) 415-1292.

**CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Bill Hill (301) 415-1661.

The NRC Meeting Schedule can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.nrc.gov/SECY/smj/schedule.htm>

This notice is distributed by mail to several hundred subscribers; if you no longer wish to receive it, or would like to be added to it, please contact the Office of the Secretary. Attn: Operations Branch, Washington, D.C. 20555 (301-415-1661).

In addition, distribution of this meeting notice over the internet system is available. If you are interested in receiving this Commission meeting schedule electronically, please send an electronic message of [wmh@nrc.gov](mailto:wmh@nrc.gov) or [dkw@nrc.gov](mailto:dkw@nrc.gov).

Dated: August 15, 1997.

**William M. Hill, Jr.,**

*SECY Tracking Officer, Office of the Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-22085 Filed 8-15-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-483]

#### Callaway Plant; Intent to Relocate Local Public Document Room

Notice is hereby given that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will be relocating the local public document room (LPDR) for records pertaining to Union Electric Company's Callaway Plant, Unit 1. The Callaway LPDR is currently located at the Callaway County Public Library, 710 Court Street, Fulton, Missouri. Library staff recently informed the NRC that they are no longer able to maintain the document collection and request that it be moved. This notice invites public comment on possible LPDR locations in the Callaway County, Missouri, area.

Among the factors the NRC will consider in selecting a new location for the LPDR are the following:

- (1) Whether the institution is an established document repository located near the nuclear facility with a history of impartially serving the public;
- (2) The physical facilities available, including shelf space, storage space, patron workspace, copying equipment and computer access;
- (3) The willingness and ability of the library staff to maintain the LPDR collection and assist the public in locating records;
- (4) The nature and extent of related research resources, such as government documents;
- (5) The public accessibility of the library, including handicap accessibility, parking, ground transportation, and hours of operation, particularly evening and weekend hours;