

present in that application of the regulation in these particular circumstances is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule.

Therefore, the Commission hereby grants the Wisconsin Electric Power Company an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR part 50, Appendix R, Section III.J, with respect to access and egress routes between the main power block and the diesel generator building, 13.8 kV switchgear building, service water and fire pump house, fuel oil pump house, gas turbine building, and warehouse 3 at Point Beach Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, to the extent alternative means of lighting as described herein are available.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (62 FR 46381).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 7th day of April 1998.

For The Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Samuel J. Collins,**

*Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-317 and 50-318]

### Baltimore Gas and Electric Company; Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2 Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating Licenses Nos. DPR-53 and DPR-69, issued to Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (the licensee), for operation of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2, located in Calvert County, Maryland.

#### Environmental Assessment

##### Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would revise the Technical Specifications (TSs) to reduce the minimum Reactor Coolant System (RCS) total flow rate from 370,000 gpm to 340,000 gpm; reduce the Reactor Protective Instrumentation trip setpoint for Reactor Coolant Flow—Low from greater than or equal to 95% to greater than or equal to 92% of design reactor

coolant flow; adjust the reactor core thermal margin safety limit lines to reflect the reduced RCS flow rate; and reduce the lift setting range for the eight Main Steam Safety Valves (MSSVs) with the highest allowable lift setting from the current range of 935 to 1065 psig to a more restrictive range of 935 to 1050 psig. In addition to the changes to the TSs necessary to support an increased number of plugged steam generator tubes, reanalysis of the accident analyses affected by this change identified an Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) associated with these changes. The USQ results from the determination that the Seized Rotor Event analysis involves an increased percentage of failed fuel cladding. Finally, four reanalyzed events Main Steamline Break (MSLB), Steam Generator Tube Rupture (SGTR) Loss of Coolant Flow, and Boron Dilution) require Nuclear Regulatory Commission approval due to changes to the methodology or assumptions used to analyze these events.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated January 31, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated February 13, February 28, March 25, April 16, August 16, and September 29, 1997, and January 22, March 17, April 8, and April 21, 1998.

##### The Need for the Proposed Action

During the 1998 Unit 1 refueling outage, Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) will perform extensive steam generator tube inspections. Tubes that experience excessive degradation reduce the integrity of the primary-to-secondary pressure boundary. Eddy current examination is used to measure the extent of tube degradation. When the reduction in the tube wall thickness reaches the plugging or repair limit, as specified in the Technical Specifications, the tube is considered defective and a corrective action is taken.

Currently, the Calvert Cliffs TSs allow defective tubes to be plugged and removed from service, or to be repaired using welded sleeving techniques developed by Westinghouse Electric Corporation or Combustion Engineering, Inc. The most widely used tube maintenance technique at many pressurized water reactors, including Calvert Cliffs, is removal of the degraded tube from service by installing plugs at both ends of the tube. The installation of steam generator tube plugs removes the heat transfer surface of the plugged tube from service, and the increased flow resistance leads to a reduction in the primary coolant flow

available for core cooling. The minimum primary coolant flow requirements in the TSs are based upon operation with no more than 800 plugged tubes in each steam generator. There is a possibility that the results of steam generator tube inspections in the upcoming refueling outage will necessitate exceeding the 800 plugged tube criteria in at least one of the Unit 1 steam generators. If this is the case, BGE will require implementation of the proposed TSs changes and approval of the USQ prior to Mode 2 entry following the 1998 Unit 1 refueling outage.

##### Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. To the extent there is any environmental impact from increasing the number of plugged steam generator tubes, such impact results from the increased RCS temperature and the reduced RCS flow rate expected to result from this activity. Reanalysis of the Seized Rotor Event analyses has indicated a greater percentage of fuel pin failures would be expected during these postulated accidents due to the revised coolant temperature and flow rates; the increased number of plugged tubes results in an increase in offsite releases, relative to past analyses.

The licensee's results of the MSLB event reanalysis with reduced RCS flow indicate a reduction in the 0-2 hour thyroid dose at the Exclusion Area Boundary (EAB) from 81 rem to 5 rem, and a decrease in the 0-2 hour whole body dose at the EAB from 0.3 rem to 0.2 rem. The licensee's results of the Seized Rotor Event reanalysis indicate the resultant 0-2 hour EAB thyroid dose increases from 3.6 rem to 12 rem, whereas the whole body dose at the EAB is reduced from 0.4 rem to 0.2 rem. The licensee presented, for the first time, doses at the low population zone (LPZ) for the MSLB and the Seized Rotor Events. These doses were 1.2 rem thyroid and 0.04 rem whole body for the MSLB and 1.0 rem thyroid and 0.04 rem whole body for the Seized Rotor Event. The guideline dose limits for accidents involving fuel failure are the 10 CFR Part 100 limits of 300 rem to the thyroid and 25 rem to the whole body.

The licensee presented the results of an SGTR analysis. Two cases were presented. The first case was based upon primary coolant being at the 100 hour technical specification value for dose equivalent  $^{131}\text{I}$  of 1  $\mu\text{Ci/g}$  and iodine spiking factor of 500. The

licensee calculated the thyroid and whole body doses at the EAB as 13 rem and 0.55 rem, respectively.

The LPZ doses, which were reported for the first time by the licensee, were calculated as 5 rem thyroid and 0.15 whole body. The second case, which was evaluated, assumed primary coolant was at the maximum instantaneous technical specification value of dose equivalent  $^{131}\text{I}$  of  $60\mu\text{Ci/g}$ . The results of this case were presented for the first time. The licensee calculated the doses at the EAB as 22 rem thyroid and 0.66 rem whole body. The LPZ doses were calculated as 6 rem thyroid and 0.18 rem whole body.

Even though there is some increase in dose for the Seized Rotor Event, the actual total dose is a fraction of the limits of 10 CFR part 100, as noted above, and there is a low probability of these accidents. This change does not significantly affect the risk of any dominant accident scenario, and the effect on overall risk of an accident at Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant is insignificant. The change will not 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 the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

The staff has performed confirmatory calculations of the consequences of an MSLB, SGTR and Seized Rotor Events. The staff has confirmed that the consequences of these accidents will result in offsite doses which are a small fraction of the 10 CFR part 100 dose guidelines. In addition, the staff has determined that the proposed action will not result in an increase in normal radiological effluents from the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant such that 10 CFR part 20 and Appendix I to 10 CFR part 50 will continue to be met.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does involve features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

#### *Alternatives to the Proposed Action*

The principal alternative to approving the license amendment request needed to allow plugging up to 2500 tubes per

steam generator would be to deny the request and retain the current coolant flow limitations. However, this alternative could reduce operational flexibility as it may prevent a Unit 1 start-up following the upcoming refueling outage, if the steam generator tube inspections necessitate plugging greater than 800 tubes in either of the unit's two steam generators. Furthermore, denial of the amendment would not significantly enhance the protection of the environment as the impacts of this alternative and the proposed 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 Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit Nos. 1 and 2 dated April 1973.

#### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 5, 1998, the staff consulted with the Maryland State official, Richard I. McLean of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

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

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission 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 January 31, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated February 13, February 28, March 25, April 16, August 16, and September 29, 1997, and January 22, March 17, April 8, and April 21, 1998, which 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 Calvert County Library, Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 12th day of May 1998.

For The Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**S. Singh Bajwa,**

*Director, Project Directorate I-1, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

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## **NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

### **Year 2000 Readiness of Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants; Issue**

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of Issuance.

**SUMMARY:** The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has issued Generic Letter (GL) 98-01 to all holders of operating licenses for nuclear power plants, except those who have permanently ceased operations and have certified that fuel has been permanently removed from the reactor vessel, to require the submittal of written responses that will give the NRC the necessary assurance that addressees are effectively addressing the year 2000 (Y2K) problem in computer systems at their respective facilities. Simply stated, the Y2K problem pertains to the potential for a system or an application to experience date-related problems, such as misreading "00" as the year 1900 rather than 2000. This generic letter requires the following information from addressees, under the provisions of Section 182a of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and 10 CFR 50.54(f): (1) Written confirmation that each addressee is implementing an effective plan to address the Y2K problem and provide for safe operation of their respective facilities prior to January 1, 2000, and (2) written certification that the facilities are Y2K ready with regard to compliance with the terms and conditions of the facility licenses and NRC regulations.

The generic letter is a "rule" for purposes of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (5 U.S.C., Chapter 8). The staff has received confirmation from the Office of Management and Budget that the generic letter is a non-major rule.

The generic letter is available in the NRC Public Document Room under accession number 9805050192.

**DATES:** The generic letter was issued on May 11, 1998.

**ADDRESSEES:** Not applicable.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Matthew Chiramal, at (301) 415-2845.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This generic letter only requires information from addressees under the provisions of Section 182a of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and 10 CFR 50.54(f). The generic letter does not constitute a backfit as defined in 10 CFR 50.109(a)(1) since it does not impose modifications of or additions to