

(second floor), 970 Broad Street (enter on Walnut Street), Newark, New Jersey 07102. The hearing will continue, to the extent necessary, on July 15-16, 1998, at that same location, beginning at 9:00 a.m. each day. (The sessions are expected to adjourn at approximately 5:00 p.m. daily.)

As provided by our May 1, 1998 Memorandum and Order, and consistent with 10 CFR 2.743(b)(3), written direct testimony of the parties need not be utilized, but the parties must have in our hands by Wednesday, July 8, 1998, lists of witnesses and documents they propose to use, together with statements of the qualifications of those witnesses (*curriculum vitae*). (If either of the parties elects to use prefiled written direct testimony, such testimony should be filed so as to be in our hands by July 8, 1998.)

Notice is also hereby given that, in accordance with 10 CFR 2.715(a), the Licensing Board will hear oral limited appearance statements on Tuesday, July 14, 1998, at the outset of the hearing and in the aforementioned hearing room. A person not a party to the proceeding will be permitted to make such a statement, setting forth his or her position on the issues. The number of persons making oral statements and the time allotted for each statement may be limited depending on the number of persons present at the designated time. (Normally, each oral statement may extend for up to five (5) minutes.) These statements do not constitute testimony or evidence but may assist the Licensing Board and parties in defining the scope of the issues in the proceeding.

Requests to make oral statements may be submitted to the Office of the Secretary, Docketing and Service Branch, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. A copy of each such request should also be submitted to Judge Charles Bechhoefer, Chairman of this Licensing Board, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ASLBP, T-3 F23, Washington, D.C. 20555.

Documents relating to this proceeding are on file at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, and at the Commission's Region I office, 475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406-1415.

Rockville, Maryland, June 10, 1998.

For the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board.

Charles Bechhoefer,

Chairman, Administrative Judge.

[FR Doc. 98-16013 Filed 6-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-387/50-388]

Pennsylvania Power and Light Company; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendment to Facility Operating License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (the licensee) to withdraw its October 24, 1994, application for proposed amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-14 and NPF-22 for Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

The proposed amendment would have revised the Technical Specifications pertaining to title/organizational changes.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on December 21, 1994 (59 FR 65820). However, by letter dated June 3, 1998, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated October 24, 1994, and the licensee's letter dated June 3, 1998, 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, N.W., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Osterhout Free Library, Reference Department, 71 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 11th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Victor Nerses,

Project Manager, Project Directorate I-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98-16109 Filed 6-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-387/50-388]

Pennsylvania Power and Light Company; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendment to Facility Operating License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (the licensee)

to withdraw its February 29, 1996, application for proposed amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-14 and NPF-22 for Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

The proposed amendment would have revised the Technical Specifications to delete the Rod Block Monitor.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment published in the **Federal Register** on April 10, 1996 (61 FR 15994). However, by letter dated March 6, 1998, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated February 29, 1996, and the licensee's letter dated March 6, 1998, 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, N.W., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Osterhout Free Library, Reference Department, 71 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 11th day of June 1998.

For The Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Victor Nerses,

Project Manager, Project Directorate I-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98-16134 Filed 6-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket 72-16]

Virginia Electric and Power Company, Issuance of Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact Regarding the Proposed Exemptions From Requirements of 10 CFR Part 72

By letter dated April 29, 1998, Virginia Electric and Power Company, (Virginia Power or applicant) requested exemptions, pursuant to 10 CFR 72.7, from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.44(d)(3) and 72.72(d). Virginia Power is seeking a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license to construct and operate an independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) at the site of its North Anna Power Station (NAPS) located in Louisa County, Virginia.

Environmental Assessment (EA)*Identification of Proposed Action*

By letter dated May 9, 1995, as supplemented, and pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72, Virginia Power submitted an application for an NRC license for a North Anna ISFSI. This application is currently under consideration by the NRC staff. By letter dated April 29, 1998, the applicant requested an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.44(d)(3) and 77.72(d) for the North Anna ISFSI.

The requirements of 10 CFR 72.44(d)(3) states in part that "An annual report be submitted to the appropriate regional office specified in Appendix A of Part 73 of this chapter, with a copy to the Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington DC, 20555, within 60 days after January 1 of each year, specifying the quantity of each of the principal radionuclides released to the environment in liquid and gaseous effluents during the previous 12 months of operation * * *". Specifically, the applicant proposes to submit a single NAPS Effluent Release Report encompassing the North Anna power reactors licensed under 10 CFR Part 50 and the proposed ISFSI which would be licensed pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72. The applicant also proposes to submit that report by May 1 of each year rather than within 60 days of January 1 as prescribed in 10 CFR 72.44(d)(3).

The applicant also requested an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.72(d), which states in part that "Records of spent fuel and high level radioactive waste in storage must be kept in duplicate. The duplicate set of records must be kept at a separate location sufficiently remote from the original records that a single event would not destroy both sets of records." The applicant proposes to maintain a single set of records of spent fuel in storage at a records storage facility that satisfies the standards set forth in ANSI N45.2.9-1974.

Separately, the staff is considering issuance of an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.124(b) which state that "When practicable the design of an ISFSI or MRS [monitored retrievable storage installation] must be based on favorable geometry, permanently fixed neutron absorbing materials (poisons), or both. Where solid neutron absorbing materials are used, the design shall provide for positive means to verify their continued efficacy." Specifically, the staff is considering granting an exemption from

the requirement to verify continued efficacy of neutron absorbing materials.

The proposed action before the Commission is whether to grant these exemptions pursuant to 10 CFR 72.7.

Need for the Proposed Action

The applicant is preparing to operate the North Anna ISFSI described in the May 9, 1995, application subject to issuance of an NRC license pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72. The applicant is implementing the necessary processes and procedures to operate the ISFSI and seeks to have those processes make efficient use of resources. With regard to annual effluent release reporting, the applicant already prepares and submits effluent release reports for the NAPS by May 1 of each year pursuant to the NAPS Technical Specifications. The NAPS effluent release report provides the same type of data and is generated by the same licensee program as would the annual effluent release report for the ISFSI. The applicant states that submittal of separate reports for the NAPS and the ISFSI would entail duplication of report preparation and verification data.

With regard to duplicate record storage for spent fuel records, the applicant stated that, pursuant to 10 CFR 72.140(d), the Virginia Power Operational Quality Assurance (QA) Program Topical Report will be used to satisfy the QA requirements for the ISFSI. The QA Program Topical Report states that QA records are maintained in accordance with commitments to ANSI N45.2.9-1974. ANSI N45.2.9-1974 allows for the storage of QA records in a duplicate storage location sufficiently remote from the original records or in a records storage facility subject to certain provisions designed to protect the records from fire and other adverse conditions. The applicant seeks to streamline and standardize recordkeeping procedures and processes for the NAPS and the North Anna ISFSI spent fuel records. The applicant states that requiring a separate method of record storage for ISFSI records diverts resources unnecessarily.

ANSI N45.2.9-1974 provides standards for the protection of nuclear power plant quality assurance records against degradation. It specifies design standards for use in the construction of record storage facilities when use of a single storage facility is desired. It includes specific standards for protection against degradation mechanisms such as fire, humidity and condensation. The standards in ANSI N45.2.9-1974 have been endorsed by the NRC in Regulatory Guide 1.88, "Collection, Storage and Maintenance of

Nuclear Power Plant Quality Assurance Records," as adequate for satisfying the record keeping requirements of 10 CFR 50, Appendix B. The standards of ANSI N45.2.9-1974 also satisfy the requirements of 10 CFR 72.72 by providing for adequate maintenance of records regarding the identity and history of the spent fuel in storage. Such records would be subject to, and need to be protected from the same types of degradation mechanisms, as nuclear power plant quality assurance records.

With regard to verification of neutron poison efficacy, the exemption is necessary to ensure that the licensing process for the North Anna ISFSI takes into account previous staff conclusions that fixed neutron poisons in the TN-32 storage cask will remain effective over the 20-year period of the license. Periodic verification of neutron poison effectiveness is not possible for the TN-32 cask and, consistent with the staff's conclusion described above, is not necessary.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the license application for the North Anna ISFSI (62 FR 16202, April 4, 1997) considered the potential environmental impacts of construction and operation of an ISFSI at the North Anna site. The proposed actions now under consideration would not change the potential environmental effects assessed in the April 4, 1997, EA. Specifically, there are no environmental impacts associated with the submittal date for the annual effluent release report. Notwithstanding the fact that the ISFSI is not expected to generate any effluents under normal or accident conditions, the submittal date for the required effluent release report does not change the amount of effluent to be reported and, thus, has no impact on the environment.

With regard to record storage, elimination of the requirement to store ISFSI records at a duplicate facility has no impact on the environment. Storage of records does not change the methods by which spent fuel will be handled and stored at the NAPS and ISFSI and does not change the amount of any effluents, radiological or non-radiological, associated with the ISFSI.

With regard to verification of neutron absorber efficacy, the applicant has proposed to use the TN-32 cask at the North Anna ISFSI. The TN-32 cask design includes fixed neutron absorbers but does not provide for periodic verification of neutron absorber efficacy. The staff previously evaluated the efficacy of the TN-32 cask fixed neutron

absorbers. In NRC's November 7, 1996, safety evaluation of the TN-32 cask Safety Analysis Report, the staff concluded that fixed neutron poisons in the TN-32 cask will remain effective for the 20-year storage period. The applicant evaluated the criticality and radiological aspects of the North Anna ISFSI based on use of the TN-32 cask, as described in the North Anna ISFSI Safety Analysis Report. Consistent with the staff conclusions in the November 7, 1996, safety evaluation, the applicant did not propose any verification of TN-32 cask neutron absorber efficacy. The staff evaluated the environmental effects of the North Anna ISFSI and issued its findings in the April 4, 1997, EA. Granting an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.124(b) will have no environmental impact because the staff has determined, through its safety evaluation of the TN-32 cask, that periodic verification of the neutron absorber efficacy is not needed to assure that the fixed neutron poisons in the TN-32 cask will remain effective during the storage period.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

Since there are no environmental impacts associated with the proposed actions, alternatives are not evaluated other than the no action alternative. The alternative to the proposed action would be to deny approval of the exemption and, therefore, not allow (1) submittal of an annual effluent release report by May 1 rather than within 60 days of January 1, or (2) storage of ISFSI spent fuel records at a single qualified record storage facility, or (3) elimination of the requirement to verify the efficacy of neutron absorbing materials. These alternatives would have the same, or greater, environmental impacts.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

An official from the State of Virginia Bureau of Radiological Health was contacted about the EA for the proposed action and had no concerns.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The environmental impacts of the proposed action have been reviewed in accordance with the requirements set forth in 10 CFR Part 51. Based upon the foregoing EA, the Commission finds that the proposed action of (1) granting an exemption from 10 CFR 72.44(d)(3) so that Virginia Power may submit an annual effluent release report by May 1 of each year, (2) granting an exemption from 10 CFR 72.72(d) so that Virginia Power may store records of spent fuel stored at the ISFSI in a single record storage facility which meets the standards of ANSI N45.2.9-1974, and

(3) granting an exemption from 10 CFR 72.124(b) so that Virginia Power need not verify the efficacy of the neutron absorbing material in ISFSI storage casks will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

This application was docketed under 10 CFR Part 72, Docket 72-16. For further details with respect to this action, see the application for an ISFSI license dated May 9, 1995, and the request for exemption dated April 29, 1998, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555, and the Local Public Document Room at the University of Virginia, Alderman Library, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 10th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William F. Kane,

Director, Spent Fuel Project Office, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 98-16018 Filed 6-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Advanced Reactor Designs; Notice of Meeting

The ACRS Subcommittee on Advanced Reactor Designs will hold a meeting on July 6-7, 1998, Room T-2B3, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

A portion of the meeting may be closed to public attendance to discuss Westinghouse proprietary information per 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(4) and safeguards information per 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(3) related to the AP600 design.

The agenda for the subject meeting shall be as follows:

Monday, July 6, 1998—8:30 a.m. until the conclusion of business

Tuesday, July 7, 1998—8:30 a.m. until the conclusion of business

The Subcommittee will continue its review of the Westinghouse AP600 design. Specifically, the Subcommittee will review issues identified by ACRS members at previous meetings related to the AP600 design. The purpose of this meeting is to gather information, analyze relevant issues and facts, and to formulate proposed positions and actions, as appropriate, for deliberation by the full Committee.

Oral statements may be presented by members of the public with the concurrence of the Subcommittee Chairman; written statements will be accepted and made available to the Committee. Electronic recordings will be permitted only during those portions of the meeting that are open to the public, and questions may be asked only by members of the Subcommittee, its consultants, and staff. Persons desiring to make oral statements should notify the cognizant ACRS staff engineer named below five days prior to the meeting, if possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

During the initial portion of the meeting, the Subcommittee, along with any of its consultants who may be present, may exchange preliminary views regarding matters to be considered during the balance of the meeting.

The Subcommittee will then hear presentations by and hold discussions with representatives of the NRC staff, Westinghouse Electric Company, their consultants, and other interested persons regarding this review.

Further information regarding topics to be discussed, the scheduling of sessions open to the public, whether the meeting has been cancelled or rescheduled, and the Chairman's ruling on requests for the opportunity to present oral statements and the time allotted therefor, can be obtained by contacting the cognizant ACRS staff engineer, Mr. Noel F. Dudley (telephone 301/415-6888) between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. (EDT). Persons planning to attend this meeting are urged to contact the above named individual one or two working days prior to the meeting to be advised of any potential changes to the agenda, etc., that may have occurred.

Dated: June 11, 1998.

Sam Duraiswamy,

Chief, Nuclear Reactors Branch.

[FR Doc. 98-16094 Filed 6-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures; Notice of Meeting

The ACRS Subcommittee on Planning and Procedures will hold a meeting on July 7, 1998, Room T-2B1, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

The entire meeting will be open to public attendance, with the exception of a portion that may be closed pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (2) and (6) to discuss