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PETITION RULE PRM 54-1
(65FR 42305)

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Michael A. Krupa
Director
Nuclear Safety & Licensing

September 29, 2000

Ms. Annette Vietti-Cook
Secretary of the Commission
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001
Attn: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Subject: NRC Request for Comments on the Union of Concerned Scientists Petition of Rulemaking

Reference: *Federal Register* Vol. 65, Pages 42305 - 42306, dated July 10, 2000.

CNRO-2000/00031

Dear Ms. Vietti-Cook:

In the referenced *Federal Register* notice, the NRC requested comments on a petition for rulemaking (PRM-54-1) filed by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) pertaining to the renewal of operating licenses for nuclear power plants. Entergy Operations, Inc. (Entergy) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this petition. In addition to the comments presented below, Entergy supports and endorses the comments submitted by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) in their letter dated September 22, 2000.

Entergy disagrees with the petition for rulemaking and entreats the NRC to deny the request to amend the license renewal regulations. The petitioner has requested that 10 CFR parts 51 and 54 governing renewal of operating licenses be amended to address potential concerns relating to the degradation through aging of piping and components of liquid and gaseous radioactive waste systems at operating nuclear power plants. The petitioner contends that in some cases these systems may not be properly inspected and maintained resulting in greater failure rates and an increased probability and/or consequences from design basis events.

Entergy agrees with NEI that there is no safety benefit to specifically include these systems within the scope of license renewal for either aging management reviews or environmental impacts for the reasons stated in the NEI comment letter. The determination of whether to include these systems in the scope of license renewal should be based on existing criteria, which maintain a focus on safety functions. In general, these radioactive waste systems do not meet the criteria because they are not credited as either preventing or mitigating an accident. The consequences of system degradation would not be increased because analyses demonstrate that even catastrophic failure will not adversely impact public health or safety.

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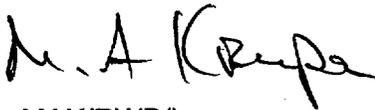
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The petitioner seems to imply that inspection and maintenance of the radioactive wastes systems is currently being neglected by some licensees and may be indicative of others. Entergy recognizes the importance of maintaining these systems to meet the requirements of Criterion 60 and Criterion 64 of Appendix A to 10 CFR part 50. The importance of properly maintaining and operating these systems is further reflected in the scope of the Reactor Oversight Process under the Public Radiation Safety cornerstone. While we cannot speak for the industry as a whole, we believe that the nuclear industry strives to operate and maintain these systems within their licensing basis. These efforts are independent of the plant operating license term. Therefore, Entergy does not perceive a need for additional regulation, special programs, or oversight during the license renewal term.

Entergy believes the UCS petition for rulemaking is unwarranted and would, if enacted, place unnecessary administrative burdens on the nuclear industry without any appreciable increase in public health and safety. Entergy therefore encourages the NRC to deny the petition so that the scope of license renewal remains focused on the safety aspects currently delineated in the existing rules.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments.

Sincerely,



MAK/RWB/baa

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