

June 17, 1994

Docket No. 50-277

Mr. George A. Hunger, Jr.
Manager-Licensing, MC 52A-5
PECO Energy Company
Nuclear Group Headquarters
Correspondence Control Desk
P.O. Box No. 195
Wayne, Pennsylvania 19087-0195

Dear Mr. Hunger:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT,
RELATED TO A REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTIONS
III.D.2.(a) AND III.D.3 OF APPENDIX J, 10 CFR PART 50, PEACH BOTTOM
ATOMIC POWER STATION, UNIT 2 (TAC NO. M89374)

An environmental assessment was prepared in response to your exemption request dated April 18, 1994. Your letter requests exemption from the requirements of Sections III.D.2.(a) and III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50.

We have enclosed a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for this proposed exemption which is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,
/S/

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

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen Dembek".

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

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

Mr. George A. Hunger, Jr.
PECO Energy Company

Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station,
Units 2 and 3

cc:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONPHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANYPUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANYDELMARVA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANYATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC COMPANYPEACH BOTTOM ATOMIC POWER STATION, UNIT 2DOCKET NO. 50-277ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OFNO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from the requirements of Sections III.D.2.(a) and III.D.3 of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50, to Philadelphia Electric Company, Public Service Electric and Gas Company, Delmarva Power and Light Company, and Atlantic City Electric Company (the licensee), for the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS), Unit 2, located at the licensee's site in York County, Pennsylvania.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would grant an exemption from 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Sections III.D.2.(a) and III.D.3. Section III.D.2.(a) states, in part: "Type B tests, except tests for air locks, shall be performed during reactor shutdown for refueling, or other convenient intervals, but in no case at intervals greater than 2 years." Section III.D.3 states: "Type C tests shall be performed during each reactor shutdown for refueling but in no case at intervals greater than 2 years." The exemption would allow a one-time

60-day extension of the 2-year requirement. Hence, this one-time exemption would allow the licensee to perform the testing in Sections III.D.2.(a) and III.D.3 during Unit 2's Cycle 10 refueling outage scheduled to begin no later than September 24, 1994.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated April 18, 1994.

Need for the Proposed Action:

PBAPS, Unit 2 is utilizing a new core design which allows the intervals between reactor shutdowns for refueling to extend beyond the maximum allowable 2-year interval. Prior to the current operating cycle, local leak rate tests were performed in conjunction with an operating cycle of 18 months. Use of extended cycle core designs has been recognized as a growing trend in the industry as discussed in the staff's Generic Letter 91-04, "Changes in Technical Specification Surveillance Intervals to Accommodate a 24-Month Fuel Cycle," dated April 2, 1991. The staff previously granted the licensee license amendments to allow PBAPS, Unit 2 to perform selected surveillances on a 24-month interval (see Amendment 169 dated August 19, 1992, and Amendment 179 dated August 2, 1993). However, the regulations cited by the licensee in the exemption request have not been revised to reflect the use of a 24-month operating cycle. Therefore, the licensee has requested an exemption in order to avoid a premature shutdown which would be needed to accomplish the testing and to properly schedule the testing during the refueling outage.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed the evaluation of the proposed exemption and concludes that this action would not significantly increase the probability or

amount of expected primary containment leakage; hence, the containment integrity would be maintained.

Based on the information presented in the licensee's application, the proposed extended test interval would not result in a non-detectable leakage rate in excess of the value established by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, or in any changes to the containment structure or plant systems. Consequently, the probability of accidents would not be increased, nor would the post-accident radiological releases be greater than previously determined. Neither would the proposed exemption otherwise affect radiological plant effluents. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that this proposed action would result in no significant radiological environmental impact.

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed exemption does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission concluded that there are no measureable environmental effects that would result from the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impacts need not be evaluated.

The principal alternative would be to deny the requested exemption. This would not reduce environmental impacts of plant operation and would result in reduced operational flexibility.

Alternate Use of Resources:

This proposed action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statements for the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Units 2 and 3, dated April 1973.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The staff consulted with the State of Pennsylvania regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for exemption dated April 18, 1994, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555, and at the local public document room located at Government Publications Section, State Library of Pennsylvania, (REGIONAL DEPOSITORY) Education Building, Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, Box 1601, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of June 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Charles L. Miller

Charles L. Miller, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation