UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001
July 10, 1996

Mr. Donald A. Reid
Vice President, Operations
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
Ferry Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301

SUBJECT: ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT (TAC NO. M95148)

Dear Mr. Reid:

The Commission has issued the enclosed Amendment No. 147 to Facility Operating License No. DPR-28 for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (VYNPS), in response to your application dated April 4, 1996.

The amendment revises the Technical Specification regarding secondary containment integrity including addition of required actions in the event secondary containment integrity is not maintained when required. It also requires surveillance of the secondary containment isolation valves under the VYNPS in-service testing program.

A copy of the related Safety Evaluation is also enclosed. Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's biweekly Federal Register Notice.

Sincerely,

/S/

Daniel H. Dorman, Project Manager
Project Directorate I-1
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-271

Enclosures: 1. Amendment No. 147 to DPR-28
2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

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Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
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cc w/encls: See next page

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DATE: 147

ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT NO.   TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-28

Docket File
PUBLIC
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VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION

DOCKET NO. 50-271

VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER STATION

AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE

Amendment No. 147
License No. DPR-28

1. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has found that:

   A. The application for amendment filed by the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (the licensee) dated April 4, 1996, complies with the standards and requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's rules and regulations set forth in 10 CFR Chapter I;

   B. The facility will operate in conformity with the application, the provisions of the Act, and the rules and regulations of the Commission;

   C. There is reasonable assurance: (i) that the activities authorized by this amendment can be conducted without endangering the health and safety of the public, and (ii) that such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations;

   D. The issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public; and

   E. The issuance of this amendment is in accordance with 10 CFR Part 51 of the Commission's regulations and all applicable requirements have been satisfied.

2. Accordingly, the license is amended by changes to the Technical Specifications as indicated in the attachment to this license amendment, and paragraph 3.B of Facility Operating License No. DPR-28 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Technical Specifications

The Technical Specifications contained in Appendix A, as revised through Amendment No.147 , are hereby incorporated in the license. The licensee shall operate the facility in accordance with the Technical Specifications.

3. This license amendment is effective as of its date of issuance, and shall be implemented within 30 days.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Jocelyn A. Mitchell

Jocelyn A. Mitchell, Acting Director
Project Directorate I-1
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Attachment: Changes to the Technical Specifications

Date of Issuance: July 10, 1996

ATTACHMENT TO LICENSE AMENDMENT NO. 147

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-28

DOCKET NO. 50-271

Replace the following pages of the Appendix A, Technical Specifications, with the attached pages. The revised pages are identified by Amendment number and contain vertical lines indicating the area of change.

Remove	Insert
152	152
155	155
---	155a
156	156
165	165
---	165a
169	169

3.7 LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR OPERATION

ΔP is reduced to <1.7) during required operability testing of the HPCI system pump, the RCIC system pump, the drywell-suppression chamber vacuum breakers, and the suppression chamber-reactor building vacuum breakers, and SGTS testing.

d. If the specifications of 3.7.A.9.a cannot be met, and the differential pressure cannot be restored within the subsequent six (6) hour period, an orderly shutdown shall be initiated and the reactor shall be in a Hot Shutdown condition in six (6) hours and a Cold Shutdown condition in the following eighteen (18) hours.

B. Standby Gas Treatment System

1. a. Except as specified in Specification 3.7.B.3.a below, whenever the reactor is in Run Mode or Startup Mode or Hot Shutdown condition, both circuits of the Standby Gas Treatment System shall be operable at all times when secondary containment integrity is required.

b. Except as specified in Specification 3.7.B.3.b below, whenever the reactor is in Refuel Mode or Cold Shutdown condition, both circuits of the Standby Gas

4.7 SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS

B. Standby Gas Treatment System

1. At least once per operating cycle, not to exceed 18 months, the following conditions shall be demonstrated.

a. Pressure drop across the combined HEPA and charcoal filter banks is less than 6 inches of water at 1500 cfm ±10%.

b. Inlet heater input is at least 9 kW.

3.7 LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR OPERATION

C. Secondary Containment System

1. Secondary Containment Integrity shall be maintained during the following modes or conditions:

   a. Whenever the reactor is in the Run Mode, Startup Mode, or Hot Shutdown condition; or

   b. During movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in secondary containment; or

   c. During alteration of the Reactor Core; or

   d. During operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel.

4.7 SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS

C. Secondary Containment System

1. Surveillance of secondary containment shall be performed as follows:

   a. A preoperational secondary containment capability test shall be conducted after isolating the Reactor Building and placing either Standby Gas Treatment System filter train in operation. Such tests shall demonstrate the capability to maintain a 0.15 inch of water vacuum under calm wind ($2 < u < 5$ mph) condition with a filter train flow rate of not more than 1500 cfm.

   b. Additional tests shall be performed during the first operating cycle under an adequate number of different environmental wind conditions to enable valid extrapolation of the test results.

   c. Secondary containment capability to maintain a 0.15 inch of water vacuum under calm wind ($2<\bar{u}<5$ mph) conditions with a filter train flow rate of not more than 1,500 cfm, shall be demonstrated at least quarterly and at each refueling outage prior to refueling.

3.7 LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR OPERATION	4.7 SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS
	d. Operability testing of the Reactor Building Automatic Ventilation System isolation valves shall be performed in accordance with Specification 4.6.E.
2. With Secondary Containment Integrity not maintained with the reactor in the Run Mode, Startup Mode, or Hot Shutdown condition, restore Secondary Containment Integrity within four (4) hours.	2. Intentionally blank.
3. If Specification 3.7.C.2 cannot be met, place the reactor in the Hot Shutdown condition within 12 hours and in the Cold Shutdown condition within the following 24 hours.	3. Intentionally blank.
4. With Secondary Containment Integrity not maintained during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in secondary containment, during alteration of the Reactor Core, or during operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel, immediately perform the following actions: a. Suspend movement of irradiated fuel assemblies and the fuel cask in secondary containment; and b. Suspend alteration of the Reactor Core; and c. Initiate action to suspend operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel.	4. Intentionally blank.

3.7 LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR OPERATION

5. Core spray and LPCI pump lower compartment door openings shall be closed at all times except during passage or when reactor coolant temperature is less than 212°F.

D. <u>Primary Containment Isolation Valves</u>

1. During reactor power operating conditions all isolation valves listed in Table 4.7.2 and all instrument line flow check valves shall be operable except as specified in Specification 3.7.D.2.

4.7 SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS

5. The core spray and LPCI lower compartment openings shall be checked closed daily.

D. <u>Primary Containment Isolation Valves</u>

1. Surveillance of the primary containment isolation valves should be performed as follows:

   a. The operable isolation valves that are power operated and automatically initiated shall be tested for automatic initiation and the closure times specified in Table 4.7.2 at least once per operating cycle.

   b. Operability testing of the primary containment isolation valves shall be performed in accordance with Specification 4.6.E.

   c. At least once per quarter, with the reactor power less than 75 percent of rated, trip all main steam isolation valves (one at a time) and verify closure time.

   d. At least twice per week, the main steam line isolation valves shall be exercised by partial closure and subsequent reopening.

BASES: 3.7 (Cont'd)

The vacuum relief system from the pressure suppression chamber to Reactor Building consists of two 100% vacuum relief breakers (2 parallel sets of 2 valves in series). Operation of either system will maintain the pressure differential less than 2 psig; the external design pressure is 2 psig. With one vacuum breaker out of service there is no immediate threat to accident mitigation or primary containment and, therefore, reactor operation can be continued for 7 days while repairs are being made.

The capacity of the ten (10) drywell vacuum relief valves is sized to limit the pressure differential between the suppression chamber and drywell during post-accident drywell cooling operations to the design limit of 2 psig. They are sized on the basis of the Bodega Bay pressure suppression tests. The ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section III, Subsection B, for this vessel allows eight (8) operable valves, therefore, with two (2) valves secured, containment integrity is not impaired.

Each drywell-suppression chamber vacuum breaker is fitted with a redundant pair of limit switches to provide fail-safe signals to panel mounted indicators in the Reactor Building and alarms in the Control Room when the disks are open more than 0.050" at all points along the seal surface of the disk. These switches are capable of transmitting the disk closed to open signal with 0.01" movement of the switch plunger. Continued reactor operation with failed components is justified because of the redundance of components and circuits and, most importantly, the accessibility of the valve lever arm and position reference external to the valve. The fail safe feature of the alarm circuits assures operator attention if a line fault occurs.

The requirement to inert the containment is based on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. This recommendation, in turn, is based on the assumption that several percent of the zirconium in the core will undergo a reaction with steam during the loss-of-coolant accident. This reaction would release sufficient hydrogen to result in a flammable concentration in the primary containment building. The oxygen concentration is therefore kept below 4% to minimize the possibility of hydrogen combustion.

General Electric has estimated that less than 0.1% of the zirconium would react with steam following a loss-of-coolant due to operation of emergency core cooling equipment. This quantity of zirconium would not liberate enough hydrogen to form a combustible mixture.

B. and C. Standby Gas Treatment System and Secondary Containment System

The secondary containment is designed to minimize any ground level release of radioactive materials which might result from a serious accident. The Reactor Building provides secondary containment during reactor operation, when the drywell is sealed and in service; the Reactor Building provides primary containment when the reactor is shutdown and the drywell is open, as during refueling. Because the secondary containment is an integral part of the complete containment system, secondary containment is required at all times that primary containment is required except, however, for initial fuel loading and low power physics testing.

In the Cold Shutdown condition or the Refuel Mode, the probability and consequences of the LOCA are reduced due to the pressure and temperature limitations in these conditions. Therefore, maintaining Secondary Containment Integrity is not required in the Cold Shutdown condition or the Refuel Mode, except for other situations for which

BASES: 3.7 (Cont'd)

significant releases of radioactive material can be postulated, such as during operations with a potential for draining the reactor vessel, during alteration of the Reactor Core, or during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in the secondary containment.

With the reactor in the Run Mode, the Startup Mode, or the Hot Shutdown condition, if Secondary Containment Integrity is not maintained, Secondary Containment Integrity must be restored within 4 hours. The 4 hours provides a period of time to correct the problem that is commensurate with the importance of maintaining secondary containment during the Run Mode, the Startup Mode, and the Hot Shutdown condition. This time period also ensures that the probability of an accident (requiring Secondary Containment Integrity) occurring during periods where Secondary Containment Integrity is not maintained, is minimal. If Secondary Containment Integrity cannot be restored within the required time period, the plant must be brought to a mode or condition in which the LCO does not apply.

Movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in the secondary containment, alteration of the Reactor Core, and operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel can be postulated to cause fission product release to the secondary containment. In such cases, the secondary containment is the only barrier to release of fission products to the environment. Alteration of the Reactor Core and movement of irradiated fuel assemblies and the fuel cask must be immediately suspended if Secondary Containment Integrity is not maintained. Suspension of these activities shall not preclude completing an action that involves moving a component to a safe position. Also, action must be immediately initiated to suspend operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel to minimize the probability of a vessel draindown and subsequent potential for fission product release. Actions must continue until operations with the potential for draining the reactor vessel are suspended.

BASES: 4.7 (Cont'd)

At the end of each refueling cycle, a leak rate test shall be performed to verify that significant leakage flow paths do not exist between the drywell and suppression chamber. The drywell pressure will be increased by at least 1 psi with respect to the suppression chamber pressure and held constant. The 2 psig set point will not be exceeded. The subsequent suppression chamber pressure transient (if any) will be monitored with a sensitive pressure gauge. If the drywell pressure cannot be increased by 1 psi over the suppression chamber pressure it would be because a significant leakage path exists; in this event the leakage source will be identified and eliminated before power operation is resumed. If the drywell pressure can be increased by 1 psi over the suppression chamber the rate of change of the suppression chamber pressure must not exceed a rate equivalent to the rate of leakage from the drywell through a 1-inch orifice. In the event the rate of change exceeds this value then the source of leakage will be identified and eliminated before power operation is resumed.

The drywell-suppression chamber vacuum breakers are exercised in accordance with Specification 4.6.E and immediately following termination of discharge of steam into the suppression chamber. This monitoring of valve operability is intended to assure that valve operability and position indication system performance does not degrade between refueling inspections. When a vacuum breaker valve is exercised through an opening-closing cycle, the position indicating lights are designed to function as follows:

Full Closed (Closed to ≤0.050" open)	2 White - On
Open (>0.050" open to full open)	2 White - Off

During each refueling outage, two drywell-suppression chamber vacuum breakers will be inspected to assure sealing surfaces and components have not deteriorated. Since valve internals are designed for a 40-year lifetime, an inspection program which cycles through all valves in one-eighth of the design lifetime is extremely conservative.

Experience has shown that a weekly measurement of the oxygen concentration in the primary containment assures adequate surveillance of the primary containment atmosphere.

B. and C. Standby Gas Treatment System and Secondary Containment System

Initiating reactor building isolation and operation of the standby gas treatment system to maintain at least a 0.15 inch of water vacuum within the secondary containment provides an adequate test of the operation of the reactor building isolation valves, leakage tightness of the reactor building, and performance of the standby gas treatment system. The testing of reactor building automatic ventilation system isolation valves in accordance with Technical Specification 4.6.E demonstrates the operability of these valves. In addition, functional testing of initiating sensors and associated trip channels demonstrates the capability for automatic actuation. Periodic testing gives sufficient confidence of reactor building integrity and standby gas treatment system performance capability.

UNITED STATES
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 147 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. DPR-28

VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION

VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER STATION

DOCKET NO. 50-271

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated April 4, 1996, the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (the licensee) submitted a request for changes to the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (VYNPS) Technical Specifications (TSs). The requested changes would revise the TS regarding secondary containment integrity including addition of required actions in the event secondary containment integrity is not maintained when required. They also would require surveillance of the secondary containment isolation valves under the VYNPS in-service testing program.

The safety objectives of the secondary containment are to minimize ground level release of airborne radioactive materials and to provide a means for a controlled release of the building atmosphere should a design basis accident occur. There are two principal accidents for which credit is taken for secondary containment integrity. These are the loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) and the refueling accident. The analysis of these accidents is discussed in the VYNPS Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) section 14.6. The secondary containment performs no active function in response to either of these limiting events, however, leak tightness is required to ensure that the release of radioactive materials from the primary containment is restricted to those leakage paths and associated leakage rates assumed in the accident analysis and that fission products entrapped in the secondary containment will be treated by the standby gas treatment system (SGTS) prior to discharge to the environment. The secondary containment system is described in VYNPS FSAR section 5.3.

2.0 EVALUATION

The licensee proposed to revise TS 3.7.C.1 regarding requirements for integrity of secondary containment. The current requirement specifies four conditions which must all be met to allow relaxation of secondary containment. These requirements are that a) the reactor is subcritical with sufficient shutdown margin; b) reactor coolant water temperature is less than 212 °F and the reactor coolant system is vented; c) no activity is being performed which could reduce the shutdown margin; and d) the fuel cask or irradiated fuel is not being moved in the Reactor Building. The proposed TS 3.7.C.1 specifies four conditions or activities during any of which secondary containment integrity shall be maintained. These are a) whenever the reactor is in the run mode, startup mode, or hot shutdown condition; b) during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in secondary containment; c) during alteration of the reactor core; and d) during operations with potential for draining the reactor vessel (OPDRVs).

During operation in the run or startup modes (as defined in VYNPS TS 1.0.R) or in the hot shutdown condition (as defined in VYNPS TS 1.0.V.1), a LOCA could lead to fission product release to the primary containment which could leak to the secondary containment. Secondary containment integrity is required during operation in these conditions. Therefore, the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.C.1.a acceptable.

During operation in the cold shutdown condition (as defined in VYNPS TS 1.0.V.2) or in the refuel mode (based on mode-selector-switch position as defined in VYNPS TS 1.0.J), the probability and consequences of the LOCA are reduced due to the pressure and temperature limitations in those modes. Therefore, maintaining secondary containment integrity (to ensure a control volume) is not required, except during specified activities for which significant releases of radioactive material can be postulated, such as during OPDRVs, during alterations of the reactor core, or during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in secondary containment. During these activities, secondary containment integrity is required. Therefore, the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.C.1.b through 3.7.C.1.d acceptable.

Proposed TS 3.7.C.2, 3.7.C.3 and 3.7.C.4 provide new required actions when secondary containment integrity is required but cannot be maintained or restored. If secondary containment integrity is not maintained, it must be restored within 4 hours (proposed TS 3.7.C.2). This provides a brief period of time to correct a problem that is commensurate with the importance of maintaining secondary containment integrity during operation in the run or startup mode or in the hot shutdown condition. This time period also ensures that the likelihood of an accident requiring secondary containment integrity occurring during periods where secondary containment integrity is not maintained is minimal. Therefore, the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.C.2 acceptable.

If secondary containment integrity cannot be restored within the required time of TS 3.7.C.2, the reactor must be in the hot shutdown condition within 12 hours and the cold shutdown condition within the following 24 hours. These times are reasonable, based on operating experience to reach the required plant condition from full power operation in an orderly manner and without unnecessarily challenging plant systems. Therefore, the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.C.3 acceptable.

Movement of irradiated fuel assemblies or the fuel cask in the secondary containment, alterations of the reactor core (as defined in TS 1.0.B), and OPDRVs can be postulated to cause fission product release to the secondary containment. In such cases, the secondary containment is the only barrier to the release of fission products to the environment. Alterations of the reactor core and movement of fuel assemblies or the fuel cask must be immediately suspended if secondary containment integrity is not maintained. Suspension of these activities shall not preclude completing an action that involves moving a component to a safe position. Also, action must be initiated to suspend OPDRVs to minimize the probability of a vessel draindown and subsequent potential for fission product release. Actions must continue until OPDRVs are suspended. Therefore, the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.C.4 acceptable.

A new TS 4.7.C.1.d is proposed which would require operability testing of reactor building automatic ventilation system isolation valves in accordance with the VYNPS in-service testing program. Implementation of this testing requirement will demonstrate the operability of these isolation valves and therefore the staff finds proposed TS 4.7.C.1.d acceptable.

The licensee proposed to revise the applicability of TS 3.7.B.1 for the SGTS to include the hot shutdown and cold shutdown conditions to remain consistent with the proposed changes to TS 3.7.C.1. This change clarifies the requirements for SGTS availability and ensures that they are consistent with the requirements for secondary containment integrity and therefore the staff finds proposed TS 3.7.B.1 acceptable.

The licensee proposed to revise the numbering of existing TS 3/4.7.C.2 to 3/4.7.C.5 to accommodate the proposed changes to TS 3/4.7.C.1. In addition, the licensee proposed to add TS 4.7.C.2 through 4.7.C.4 as "Intentionally blank" to maintain consistency between new TS 3.7.C.5 and 4.7.C.5. These changes are editorial and are therefore acceptable.

The license proposed changes to the Bases for TS 3.7.B and C and 4.7.B and C to address the proposed changes to those TS. The staff has reviewed the proposed Bases changes and has no objection to them.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Vermont State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes requirements with respect to installation or use of facility components located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20 and changes surveillance requirements. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (61 FR 20859). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Principal Contributor: D. Dorman

Date: July 10, 1996