

December 8, 1998

Mr. Harold W. Keiser
Chief Nuclear Officer and President-
Nuclear Business Unit
Public Service Electric and Gas
Company
Post Office Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, NJ 08038

SUBJECT: SALEM NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. M99361
AND M99362)

Dear Mr. Keiser:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for amendment dated August 1, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated October 6, 1997, February 18 and July 7, 1998. The proposed amendments would revise Technical Specification Section 4.2.1, "Aquatic Monitoring," of Appendix B, Environmental Protection Plan, to require that Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) adhere to the Incidental Take Statement approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), but remove the specific requirements. Removing the specific requirements from Section 4.2.1 enables PSE&G to use relief granted by NMFS on a case-by-case basis without further action by the NRC staff.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,
original signed by:
Patrick D. Milano, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-272 and 50-311

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 8, 1998

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Chief Nuclear Officer and President-
Nuclear Business Unit
Public Service Electric and Gas
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The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick D. Milano", is written over a horizontal line.

Patrick D. Milano, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-272 and 50-311

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. Harold W. Keiser
Public Service Electric & Gas
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Units 1 and 2

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY
DOCKET NOS. 50-272 AND 50-311
SALEM NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 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 License Nos. DPR-70 and DPR-75 issued to Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G, the licensee) for operation of the Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Salem County, New Jersey.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would revise Technical Specification (TS) Section 4.2.1, "Aquatic Monitoring," of Appendix B, Environmental Protection Plan (EPP), to require that PSE&G adhere to the Incidental Take Statement issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), but removes the specific language of the Incidental Take Statement. Removing the specific language from Section 4.2.1 enables PSE&G to use relief granted by NMFS and the Commission on a case-by-case basis without further action by the NRC staff.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated August 1, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated October 6, 1997, February 18 and July 7, 1998.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would provide PSE&G with the flexibility to utilize relief granted by the Commission and NMFS on a case-by-case basis without further action by the NRC staff. The current wording of Section 4.2.1 would require, in the event of changes to the Biological Opinion

or the Incidental Take Statement, that PSE&G continue to maintain, for example, daily cleaning of the trash racks, from June 1 through October 15, 1998, even though granted relief by the NMFS, until an amendment request could be submitted and approved by the Commission. The revision would enable PSE&G to have the ability to use approvals from the Commission and NMFS without requiring amendments to the TS. Changes to the Incidental Take Statement must be proceeded by consultation between the Commission, as the authorizing agency, and NMFS.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed changes do not change the requirements or intent of Section 4.2.1. PSE&G would continue to adhere to the specific requirements within the Incidental Take Statement, to the Biological Opinion. 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 occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other nonradiological environmental impact.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no significant environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative 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 Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1 and 2.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on November 4, 1998, the staff consulted with the New Jersey State official, Mr. R. Pinney of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Nuclear Engineering, 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 August 1, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated October 6, 1997, February 18 and July 7, 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 Salem Free Public Library, 112 West Broadway, Salem, NJ 08079.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 8th day of December 1998.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Robert A. Capra, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation