

February 23, 1995

Mr. M. S. Tuckman
Senior Vice President
Nuclear Generation
Duke Power Company
P. O. Box 1006
Charlotte, North Carolina 28201

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF EXEMPTION REQUEST FROM 10 CFR PART 50,
APPENDIX J - CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 1 (TAC NO. M90625)

Dear Mr. Tuckman:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact." This notice relates to Duke Power Company's, et al. (licensee or DPC), application dated October 18, 1994, as supplemented on February 7, 1995, in which DPC requested a one-time only exemption from the schedular requirements of 10 CFR 50 Appendix J, that would allow rescheduling the third containment integrated leak rate test (ILRT) in the first 10-year service period from the end-of-Cycle 8 outage until the end-of-Cycle 9 outage. The requested exemption would also allow the decoupling of this third test from the endpoint of the first 10-year inservice inspection.

This notice is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-413

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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

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This notice is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert E. Martin".

Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-413

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE POWER COMPANY, ET AL.DOCKET NO. 50-413CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 1ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OFNO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Paragraph III.D.1.(a), Type A Tests, to the Duke Power Company, et al. (the licensee), for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1, located in York County, South Carolina, in accordance with Facility Operating License No. NFP-35.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of the Proposed Action:

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to the licensee's application of October 18, 1994, as supplemented on February 7, 1995. The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Paragraph III.D.1.(a), to the extent that a one-time schedular extension would permit rescheduling the third containment integrated leak rate test (ILRT) in the first 10-year service period from the end-of-Cycle 8 outage until the end-of-Cycle 9 outage. The requested exemption would also allow the decoupling of this third test from the endpoint of the first 10-year inservice inspection.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The current containment integrated leakage rate (ILRT) requirements for Catawba Units 1 and 2, pursuant to Appendix J, are that, after the

preoperational leak rate test, a set of three Type A tests must be performed at approximately equal intervals during each 10-year period. Also, the third test of each set must be conducted when the plant is shut down for the 10-year plant inservice inspection. This is reflected in the Catawba Technical Specifications (TS) as a testing interval of once each 40 months plus or minus 10 months, for a frequency of three times in a 120-month period. To date, for Catawba Unit 1, the preoperational and the first two periodic ILRTs have been conducted. The most recent ILRT was conducted in March 1991, approximately 47 months ago. Thus, in accordance with Appendix J and the current TS, an ILRT would have to be conducted during the refueling outage beginning in February 1995 (the end-of-cycle (EOC) 8 outage).

The licensee has requested an exemption from Appendix J and a corresponding change to the TS that would allow a one-time change to the interval for the Unit 1 ILRT from 40 plus or minus 10 months to 60 plus or minus 10 months (once each 5 years). This would allow the EOC-8 ILRT to be rescheduled for EOC-9. Therefore, the need for the licensee's proposed action is to allow a longer interval between the Catawba Unit 1 second and third periodic Type A ILRTs which will result in a cost savings to the licensee.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The proposed one-time exemption would not increase the probability or consequences of accidents previously analyzed and the proposed one-time exemption would not affect facility radiation levels or facility radiological effluents. The licensee has analyzed the results of previous Type A tests performed at the Catawba Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1. The licensee has provided an acceptable basis for concluding that the proposed one-time extension of the Type A test interval would maintain the containment leakage

rates within acceptable limits. Accordingly, the Commission has concluded that the one-time extension does not result in a significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released nor does it result in a significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed exemption only involves Type A testing on the containment. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed exemption, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to this action would be to deny the request for exemption. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of Catawba Nuclear Station Unit No. 1," dated January 1983.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, the NRC staff consulted with the South Carolina State official regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

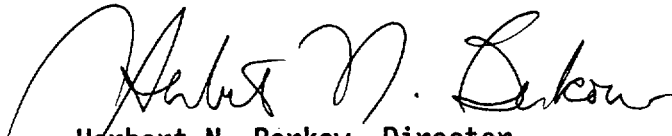
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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 exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's letter dated October 18, 1994, as supplemented February 7, 1995, 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 York County Library, 138 East Black Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of February 1995.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Herbert N. Berkow, Director
Project Directorate II-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation