

June 15, 1995

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

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF EXEMPTION REQUEST FROM 10 CFR PART 50,  
APPENDIX J - CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 2 (TAC NO. M92382)

Dear Mr. Tuckman:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact." This notice relates to your application dated May 18, 1995, as supplemented by letter dated May 31, 1995, requesting a one-time only exemption from the scheduler requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, that would allow rescheduling the third Catawba Unit 2 containment integrated leak rate test in the first 10-year service period from the end-of-cycle 7 outage until the end-of-cycle 8 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/

Herbert N. Berkow, Director  
Project Directorate II-2  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-414

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001  
June 15, 1995

Mr. M. S. Tuckman  
Senior Vice President  
Nuclear Generation  
Duke Power Company  
P. O. Box 1006  
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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 "Herbert N. Berkow".

Herbert N. Berkow, Director  
Project Directorate II-2  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-414

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. David L. Rehn  
Duke Power Company

cc:

Mr. Z. L. Taylor  
Regulatory Compliance Manager  
Duke Power Company  
4800 Concord Road  
York, South Carolina 29745

A. V. Carr, Esquire  
Duke Power Company  
422 South Church Street  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242-0001

J. Michael McGarry, III, Esquire  
Winston and Strawn  
1400 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

North Carolina Municipal Power  
Agency Number 1  
1427 Meadowood Boulevard  
P. O. Box 29513  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0513

Mr. T. Richard Puryear  
Nuclear Technical Services Manager  
Westinghouse Electric Corporation  
Carolinas District  
2709 Water Ridge Parkway, Suite 430  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28217

County Manager of York County  
York County Courthouse  
York, South Carolina 29745

Richard P. Wilson, Esquire  
Assistant Attorney General  
South Carolina Attorney General's  
Office  
P. O. Box 11549  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Piedmont Municipal Power Agency  
121 Village Drive  
Greer, South Carolina 29651

Dayne H. Brown, Director  
Division of Radiation Protection  
N.C. Department of Environment,  
Health and Natural Resources  
P. O. Box 27687  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-7687

Catawba Nuclear Station

North Carolina Electric Membership  
Corporation  
P. O. Box 27306  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Senior Resident Inspector  
4830 Concord Road  
York, South Carolina 29745

Regional Administrator, Region II  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
101 Marietta Street, NW. Suite 2900  
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

Max Batavia, Chief  
Bureau of Radiological Health  
South Carolina Department of  
Health and Environmental Control  
2600 Bull Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Mr. G. A. Copp  
Licensing - EC050  
Duke Power Company  
526 South Church Street  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242-0001

Saluda River Electric  
P. O. Box 929  
Laurens, South Carolina 29360

Ms. Karen E. Long  
Assistant Attorney General  
North Carolina Department of Justice  
P. O. Box 629  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Elaine Wathen, Lead REP Planner  
Division of Emergency Management  
116 West Jones Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603-1335

Mr. David L. Rehn  
Vice President, Catawba Site  
Duke Power Company  
12700 Hagers Ferry Road  
Huntersville, North Carolina 28078

Heinz Mueller  
Environmental Review Coordinator  
345 Courtland St., NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30365

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONDUKE POWER COMPANY, ET AL.DOCKET NO. 50-414CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 2ENVIRONMENTAL 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 Duke Power Company, et al. (the licensee), for operation of the Catawba Nuclear Station, Unit No. 2, 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 dated May 18, 1995, as supplemented by letter dated May 31, 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 7 outage until the end-of-cycle 8 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 requirement for Catawba, Unit 2, pursuant to Appendix J, is that, after the preoperational leak rate

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 2, the preoperational and the first two periodic ILRTs have been conducted. The most recent ILRT was conducted in February 1993, approximately 28 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 October 1995 (the end-of-cycle (EOC) 7 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 2 ILRT from 40 plus or minus 10 months to less than or equal to 70 months. This would allow the EOC-7 ILRT to be rescheduled for EOC-8. Therefore, the need for the licensee's proposed action is to allow a longer interval between the Catawba Unit 2 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. 2. 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 Units 1 and 2," dated January 1983.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on June 6, 1995, the NRC staff consulted with the South Carolina State official, Mr. M. K. Batavia, PE, Chief of the Bureau of Radiological Health, Department of Health and Environmental

Controls, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

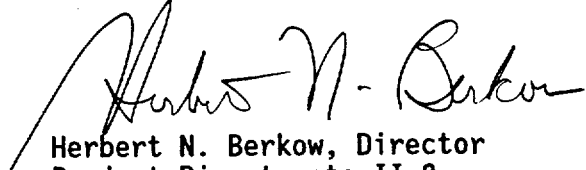
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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 May 18, 1995, as supplemented by letter dated May 31, 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 15th day of June 1995.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

  
Herbert N. Berkow, Director  
Project Directorate II-2  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation