

February 1, 1991

Docket Nos. 50-348
and 50-364

Senior Vice President
Alabama Power Company
40 Inverness Center Parkway
P. O. Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201

Dear Mr. Hairston:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT RE: AMENDMENT TO EXEMPTION FROM
10 CFR PART 20, APPENDIX A, FOOTNOTE d-2(c) - JOSEPH M. FARLEY
NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. 76181 and 76182)

Enclosed is a copy of an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for your information. This assessment relates to your request dated February 19, 1990, as supplemented June 11 and December 5, 1990, for an amendment to an exemption from the requirement of footnote d-2(c) of Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20 granted on October 23, 1984. In essence, the exemption amendment would allow Mine Safety Appliances GMR-I canisters to be stored in a Class C storage environment, rather than a Class A storage environment, and revises the fit factor for the respirator in which the cansisters are used. The assessment has been forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

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Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Stephen T. Hoffman, Project Manager
Project Directorate II-1
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
As stated

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FARLEY FILE

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2
ALABAMA POWER COMPANY
DOCKET NOS. 50-348 AND 50-364
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF
NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to an exemption from the requirement of footnote d-2(c) of Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20 issued by the Commission on October 23, 1984, to Alabama Power Company (the licensee), for the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2 (Farley 1 and 2), located near the city of Dothan, Alabama.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would relax the requirement contained in the exemption issued October 23, 1984, which states that canisters will be maintained in Class A storage. The amendment would allow the authorized MSA GMR-I canisters to be stored in a Class C storage environment. The amendment also revises the fit factor for the respirator in which the canisters will be used. The staff's technical evaluation of this request will be published in a report entitled "Safety Evaluation by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation Related to Class C Storage Environment for Sorbent Canisters, Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2."

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The evaluation is responsive to the licensee's February 19, 1990, application, as supplemented June 11, 1990, and December 5, 1990, for an amendment to the exemption.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed amendment to the exemption is needed because the Class A storage requirement is unnecessarily restrictive and results in lost work time to retrieve the canisters from the Class A storage area. The revised fit factor resolves an inconsistency between the original exemption issued on October 23, 1984, and the requirements of Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The proposed amendment to the exemption permits the use of Class C storage which will allow sufficient canisters to be stored where they can easily be obtained for use. The Class A storage area requirement necessitates frequent and time-consuming restocking during periods of heavy GMR-I canister use. In addition, Class C storage would preclude the unnecessary discarding of canisters subjected to temperature and humidity conditions solely to meet a storage requirement not imposed or utilized by the manufacturer.

The exemption granted on October 23, 1984, included a limitation that the canisters be used with a full facepiece capable of providing a protection factor greater than 100. Protection factors are a measure of protection from the work place atmosphere that can be assumed when using a particular respirator. Protection factors are established in Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20 for various classes of respirators. Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20 specifies a maximum protection factor of 50 for a full facepiece negative pressure

respirator in which the MSA GMR-I canisters are to be used. Therefore, Appendix A to 10 CFR Part 20 does not allow credit for a protection factor of 100 for a full facepiece respirator as specified in the original exemption.

In response to discussions with the staff, the licensee resolved this issue by revising the amendment request to commit to use the MSA GMR-I canisters with a full facepiece respirator capable of providing a fit factor equal to or greater than 500. A minimum fit factor of 500 is consistent with current good industry practice and has been found acceptable in the past by the staff. Therefore, the revised fit factor is acceptable for the use of the MSA GMR-I canisters at Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2.

With regard to potential radiological impacts to the general public, the proposed exemption amendment involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect the potential for or consequences of radiological accidents and does not affect radiological plant effluents. Consequently, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological impacts associated with the proposed exemption amendment.

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

Alternative to the Proposed Action:

Because the staff has concluded that there is no significant environmental impact associated with the proposed exemption amendment, any alternative to this amendment will have either no significantly different environmental impact or greater environmental impact.

The principal alternative would be to deny the requested exemption amendment. This would not reduce environmental impacts as a result of the plant operations.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, dated December 1974.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The staff reviewed the licensee's request that supports the proposed exemption amendment. The staff did not consult other agencies or persons.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, we conclude 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 request for the exemption amendment dated February 19, 1990, as supplemented June 11, 1990, and December 5, 1990, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's

Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC and at the local public document room, Houston-Love Memorial Library, 212 W. Burdeshaw Street, Dothan, Alabama 36302.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 1st day of February 1991.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Original Signed By:

Ronnie H. Lo, Acting Director
Project Directorate II-1
Division of Reactor Projects I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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