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Docket No. 50-305

Mr. D. C. Hintz
 Vice President - Nuclear Power
 Wisconsin Public Service
 Corporation
 P.O. Box 19002
 Green Bay, Wisconsin 54037-9002

Dear Mr. Hintz:

SUBJECT: EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF 10 CFR PART 50, APPENDIX R, SECTION III G. - KEWAUNEE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT-TAC 65783

The Commission has issued the enclosed Exemption to Appendix R of 10 CFR Part 50 in response to your application dated June 23, 1987. The exemption permits the operation of the Kewaunee Plant without a fixed fire suppression system in the Shield Building Fire Area SB-65 and in the Control Room portion of Fire Area AX-35.

The basis for the exemption is contained in the enclosed Exemption and in the Safety Evaluation which is also enclosed. A copy of the Exemption is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

JS

Joseph G. Gitter, Project Manager
 Project Directorate III-3
 Division of Reactor Projects - III,
 IV, V and Special Projects

Enclosures:

- 1) Exemption
- 2) Safety Evaluation

cc: See next page

*SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCE

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Mr. D. C. Hintz
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant

cc:

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of
WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATION
Kewaunee Nuclear Plant

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Docket No. 50-305

EXEMPTION

I.

The Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPSC, the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR-43 which authorizes operation of the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant (the facility), at a steady-state power level not to exceed 1650 megawatts thermal. The facility is a pressurized water reactor located in Kewaunee County, Wisconsin. The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations, and Orders of the Commission now or hereafter in effect.

II.

On November 19, 1980, the Commission published a revised Section 50.48 and a new Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 regarding fire protection features of nuclear power plants. The revised Section 50.48 and Appendix R became effective on February 17, 1981. Section III of Appendix R contains 15 subsections lettered A through O, each of which specifies requirements for a particular aspect of the fire protection features at a nuclear power plant.

One of the subsections, III.G, is the subject of the licensee's exemption request. Specifically, Subsection III.G requires specific fire

protection features for structures, systems and components important to safe shutdown of the plant.

III.

By letter dated June 23, 1987, the licensee submitted requests for two exemptions from the technical requirements of Section III.G of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50. Section III.G of Appendix R is related to fire protection features for ensuring the availability of necessary systems and associated circuits used to achieve and maintain safe plant shutdown.

The first exemption request pertains to paragraph III.G.2(b) of Appendix R. In areas where cables or associated circuits of redundant trains are located in the same fire area outside primary containment, paragraph III.G.2 of Appendix R requires separation by a 3-hour fire barrier or separation by more than 20 feet with no intervening combustibles and with fire detection and automatic fire suppression. The exemption was requested from the specific requirements of this section to the extent that it requires automatic fire suppression systems to be installed throughout the Shield Building, Fire Area SB-65. The Shield Building consists of a 5-foot annular space between the building's inside wall and the reactor containment vessel. Cables required for alternative and dedicated shutdown are located within the annular space in two separate cable penetration areas. The cable penetration areas are separated by a distance greater than 20 feet free from intervening combustibles.

The fixed combustible loading in Fire Area SB-65 is low, consisting primarily of cable insulation. The overall combustible load is less than 1,500 BTU per square foot. Transient combustibles within the Shield Building are

minimized by strictly controlled access and plant administrative procedures. Ionization smoke detectors are installed within the annular space of the Shield Building. These detectors are located near each cable penetration area. Visual and audible alarms for these detectors are provided in the Control Room. For manual fire fighting within Fire Area SB-65, portable fire extinguishers and hose stations are available in adjacent areas.

The purpose of requiring a fixed fire suppression system is to prevent a fire of significant magnitude from developing and damaging the ability to achieve and maintain safe shutdown. Due to the low combustible loading and the clear spatial separation between penetration areas, a significant fire exposure to alternative and dedicated shutdown cables does not exist. It is expected that, if a fire were to occur, it would develop slowly with an initially low heat release. Ionization detectors located at each of the cable penetration areas would activate annunciators in the Control Room, warning operators of a fire in the particular penetration area of the Shield Building. The fire brigade would then be dispatched to extinguish the fire manually, using the hose lines or portable extinguishers provided in adjacent areas.

Based on the low combustible loading of the area, the passive protection provided by the separation between penetration areas, the installed smoke detectors and the fire brigade's ability to extinguish a fire in the area, there is reasonable assurance that a fire in the Shield Building would not prevent a safe plant shutdown. The staff concludes the installation of fixed fire suppression in the Shield Building will not significantly increase the level of fire protection currently provided. Therefore, the fire protection features currently provided for Fire Area SB-65 are acceptable.

The second exemption request pertains to paragraph III.G.3 of Appendix R, which requires that fire detection and fixed fire suppression systems be provided to areas, rooms, or zones that contain alternative or dedicated shutdown capability.

An exemption was requested from the requirements of Section III.G.3 of Appendix R to the extent that it requires fixed fire suppression throughout the Control Room portion of Fire Area AX-35. Automatic fire suppression systems are not currently installed in the Kewaunee Control Room. The Control Room is located on the 626-foot elevation of the Auxiliary Building in Fire Area AX-53. It contains the normal and engineered safety features control boards for the plant and is continuously manned by trained operators. Combustible materials within Control Room primarily consist of cable insulation and ordinary combustibles. The combustible loading is less than 10,000 BTU per square foot. Fire Area AX-35 is separated from other fire areas within the plant by fire barriers of 3-hour rated construction. The barriers are generally reinforced concrete or concrete block. Openings through the barriers are protected with 3-hour rated opening protectives such as penetration seals and dampers. Ionization smoke detectors are installed in selected panels and consoles in the Control Room. Additionally, a smoke detector is installed within the HVAC return ducting for the room. Portable extinguishers are available in the Control Room with additional extinguishers and hose stations available in adjacent areas. Alternate shutdown capability meeting the criteria of Section III.G.3 has been provided for the Control Room via a dedicated shutdown panel located in Fire Zone TU-95A.

The fire protection in Fire Area AX-35 does not comply with technical requirements of Section III.G.3 of Appendix R because automatic fire suppression is not installed in a zone for which alternative shutdown capability is provided. The purpose of requiring a fixed fire suppression system is to prevent a fire of significant magnitude from developing and damaging the ability to achieve and maintain safe shutdown. Because of the presence of ionization detectors and the continuous manning by trained operators, a fire in the Control Room should be detected early and extinguished by the fire brigade. Additionally, alternative shutdown capability independent of Fire Area AX-35 would be possible by means of a dedicated shutdown panel in Fire Zone TU-95A.

Based on the low combustible loading, the fire detection provided, the continuous manning by trained Control Room operators and the alternative shutdown capability provided, there is reasonable assurance that a fire in the Control Room will not prevent a safe plant shutdown. The staff concludes the installation of fixed fire suppression in the Control Room will not significantly increase the level of fire protection currently provided. Therefore, the fire protection features currently provided for fire area AX-35 are acceptable.

IV.

Accordingly, the Commission has determined, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), that: (1) the exemption as described in Section III is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security; and (2) special circumstances are present for the exemption in that application of the regulations in this particular

circumstance is not necessary to achieve the underlying purposes of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50. Therefore, the Commission grants the exemptions from the requirements of Section III.G. of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 to the extent discussed in Section III above.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will have no significant impact on the environment (53 FR 11155.)

This Exemption is effective upon issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


Dennis M. Crutchfield, Director
Division of Reactor Projects - III,
IV, V and Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Dated at Rockville, Maryland
this 12th day of May 1988



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATION

WISCONSIN POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

MADISON GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

KEWAUNEE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

DOCKET NO. 50-305

EXEMPTION FROM SECTION III.G OF 10 CFR PART 50, APPENDIX R

INTRODUCTION

By letter dated June 23, 1987, the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPSC), submitted a request for two exemptions from the technical requirements of Section III.G of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50. The first exemption was requested from the specific requirements of Section III.G.2(b) to the extent that it requires automatic fire suppression systems to be installed throughout the Shield Building. The second exemption was requested from the specific requirements of Section III.G.3 to the extent that it requires fixed fire suppression throughout the Control Room portion of Fire Area AX-35.

The NRC hired a contractor, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), to review the information submitted by WPSC to support their Appendix R exemption requests. By letter dated December 3, 1987, SAIC submitted their Technical Evaluation Report (TER) which is attached. The NRC staff concurs with the TER.

DISCUSSION

A discussion of both exemptions is contained in the TER.

EVALUATION

An evaluation of both exemptions is contained in the TER.

CONCLUSION

Based on the evaluation contained in the TER, which is cited above, the NRC staff concludes that the existing fire protection for the Shield Building and the Control Room portion of Fire Area AX-35 provides a level of fire

protection equivalent to the technical requirements of Section III.G of Appendix R of 10 CFR Part 50. Therefore, the exemption from providing automatic fire suppression for these areas is acceptable and should be granted.

Attachment:

SAIC Technical Evaluation Report-SAIC-87/3096

Date: May 12, 1988

Principal Contributor: Dennis Kubicki