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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANY

PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY

DELMARVA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

ATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC COMPANY

DOCKET NO. 50-278

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF

NO 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, to the Philadelphia Electric Company, et al. (the licensee) for the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Unit 3, located at the licensee's site in York County, Pennsylvania.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would grant relief from Sections III.D.2(a) and III.D.3 of Appendix J which require that Type B and C leak rate tests be performed during reactor shutdown for refueling but in no case at intervals greater than 2 years.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The affected containment penetrations must be leak rate tested (either Type B or C test) during shutdown reactor conditions because testing of the penetrations requires access to the drywell or requires isolation of safety systems. For the affected penetrations, the licensee last conducted leak rate tests during a refueling outage that began in September 1991. These previous

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leak rate tests will reach the 2-year maximum test interval imposed by Appendix J starting on September 14, 1993.

The licensee's next refueling outage is scheduled to begin no later than September 18, 1993. The licensee proposed the exemption to extend the leak test interval for the affected penetrations by 60 days. This will allow the licensee to avoid shutting down 4 days early for the sole purpose of conducting Appendix J tests and will allow the licensee to have flexibility to schedule the leak rate tests within the upcoming outage.

Environmental Impact of the Proposed Action:

The proposed exemption would postpone the affected Type B and C tests by approximately 60 days. The recent performance history for Unit 3 Local Leak Rate Test (LLRTs) demonstrates adequate margin to acceptable leak rate limits. The fall 1991 Unit 3 as-found total Type B and C minimum pathway leak rate was 35,197 cc/min. The as-left leakage for that same refueling outage was 24,453 cc/min. The 1991 as-found data followed an operating cycle that had commenced in November 1989. The amount of leakage necessary for demonstrating primary containment integrity (L_a , minimum pathway leakage) is 125,417 cc/min for Unit 3. The additional 4 days of operation between expiration of the current leak tests and commencement of the refueling outage is not expected to significantly decrease the margin between expected as-found leak rate and L_a .

Thus, radiological releases will not differ from those determined previously and the proposed exemption does not otherwise affect facility radiological effluent or occupational exposures. In addition, the proposed exemption will not increase the probability or consequences of any reactor accidents. With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed

exemption does not affect plant non-radiological effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes there are no measurable radiological or non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternative to the Proposed Action:

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 impact of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This proposed action does not involve the use of resources not considered previously in the Final Environmental Statement related to the operation of Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Units 2 and 3 dated April 1973.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The staff consulted with the State of Pennsylvania regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

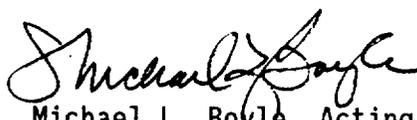
The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption. Based upon the forgoing environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated June 11, 1993, and supplemented by letter dated July 26, 1993. This letter is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, Lower Level, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20555 and at the local public document room

located at the State Library of Pennsylvania, (REGIONAL DEPOSITORY) Government Publications Section, Education Building, Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, Box 1601, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17105.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 19th day of August, 1993.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



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