

September 22, 1997

Mr. Otto L. Maynard
President and Chief Executive Officer
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
Post Office Box 411
Burlington, Kansas 66839

SUBJECT: WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION - AMENDMENT NO. 110 TO FACILITY
OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-42 (TAC NO. M98204)

Dear Mr. Maynard:

The Commission has issued the enclosed Amendment No. 110 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-42 for the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS). The amendment consists of changes to the Technical Specifications (TS) in response to your application dated July 3, 1997.

The amendment modifies TSs 5.3.1, "Fuel Assemblies" and 6.1.9.6, "CORE OPERATING LIMITS REPORT (COLR)" to add ZIRLO as fuel material and the use of limited zirconium alloy filler rods in place of fuel rods.

A copy of our related Safety Evaluation is enclosed. The Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's next biweekly Federal Register notice.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By
James C. Stone, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-482

Enclosures: 1. Amendment No. 110 to NPF-42
2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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A copy of our related Safety Evaluation is enclosed. The Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's next biweekly Federal Register notice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James C. Stone".

James C. Stone, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-482

Enclosures: 1. Amendment No. 110 to NPF-42
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cc w/encls: See next page

cc w/encls:

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

WOLF CREEK NUCLEAR OPERATING CORPORATION

WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION

DOCKET NO. 50-482

AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE

Amendment No. 110
License No. NPF-42

1. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has found that:
 - A. The application for amendment to the Wolf Creek Generating Station (the facility) Facility Operating License No. NPF-42 filed by the Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (the Corporation), dated July 3, 1997, complies with the standards and requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's rules and regulations set forth in 10 CFR Chapter I;
 - B. The facility will operate in conformity with the application, as amended, the provisions of the Act, and the rules and regulations of the Commission;
 - C. There is reasonable assurance: (i) that the activities authorized by this amendment can be conducted without endangering the health and safety of the public, and (ii) that such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations;
 - D. The issuance of this license amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public; and
 - E. The issuance of this amendment is in accordance with 10 CFR Part 51 of the Commission's regulations and all applicable requirements have been satisfied.

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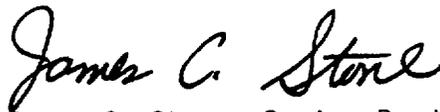
2. Accordingly, the license is amended by changes to the Technical Specifications as indicated in the attachment to this license amendment and Paragraph 2.C.(2) of Facility Operating License No. NPF-42 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2. Technical Specifications

The Technical Specifications contained in Appendix A, as revised through Amendment No. 110, and the Environmental Protection Plan contained in Appendix B, both of which are attached hereto, are hereby incorporated in the license. The Corporation shall operate the facility in accordance with the Technical Specifications and the Environmental Protection Plan.

3. The license amendment is effective as of its date of issuance to be implemented within 30 days of the date of issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



James C. Stone, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Attachment: Changes to the Technical
Specifications

Date of Issuance: September 22, 1997

ATTACHMENT TO LICENSE AMENDMENT NO. 110

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-42

DOCKET NO. 50-482

Replace the following pages of the Appendix A Technical Specifications with the attached page. The revised pages are identified by Amendment number and contain marginal lines indicating the areas of change. The corresponding overleaf pages are also provided to maintain document completeness.

REMOVE

5-6
6-21b

INSERT

5-6
6-21b

DESIGN FEATURES

5.3 REACTOR CORE

FUEL ASSEMBLIES

5.3.1 The reactor shall contain 193 fuel assemblies. Each assembly shall consist of a matrix of Zircaloy or ZIRLO clad fuel rods with an initial composition of natural or slightly enriched uranium dioxide (UO_2) as fuel material. Limited substitutions of zirconium alloy or stainless steel filler rods for fuel rods, in accordance with approved applications of fuel rod configurations, may be used. Fuel assemblies shall be limited to those fuel designs that have been analyzed with applicable NRC approved codes and methods and shown by test or analyses to comply with all fuel safety design bases. A limited number of lead test assemblies that have not completed representative testing may be placed in non-limiting core regions.

CONTROL ROD ASSEMBLIES

5.3.2 The core shall contain 53 full-length and no part-length control rod assemblies. The full-length control rod assemblies shall contain a nominal 142 inches of absorber material. All control rod assemblies shall be hafnium, silver-indium-cadmium, or a mixture of both types. All control rods shall be clad with stainless steel tubing.

5.4 REACTOR COOLANT SYSTEM

DESIGN PRESSURE AND TEMPERATURE

5.4.1 The Reactor Coolant System is designed and shall be maintained:

- a. In accordance with the Code requirements specified in Section 5.2 of the FSAR, with allowance for normal degradation pursuant to the applicable Surveillance Requirements,
- b. For a pressure of 2485 psig, and
- c. For a temperature of 650°F, except for the pressurizer which is 680°F.

VOLUME

5.4.2 The total volume of the Reactor Coolant System, including pressurizer and surge line, is 12,135 ± 100 cubic feet at a nominal T_{avg} of 557°F.

5.5 METEOROLOGICAL TOWER LOCATION

5.5.1 The meteorological tower shall be located as shown on Figure 5.1-1.

DESIGN FEATURES

5.6 FUEL STORAGE

CRITICALITY

5.6.1.1 The spent fuel storage racks are designed and shall be maintained with:

- a. A k_{eff} equivalent to less than or equal to 0.95 when flooded with unborated water, which includes an allowance for uncertainties as described in Section 4.3 of the USAR. This is based on new fuel with an enrichment of 4.45 weight percent U-235 in Region 1 and on spent fuel with combination of initial enrichment and discharge exposures, shown in Figure 3.9-1, in Region 2, and
- b. A nominal 9.236 inch center-to-center distance between fuel assemblies placed in the storage racks.

5.6.1.2 The k_{eff} for new fuel for the first core loading stored dry in the spent fuel storage racks shall not exceed 0.98 when aqueous foam moderation is assumed.

DRAINAGE

5.6.2 The spent fuel storage pool is designed and shall be maintained to prevent inadvertent draining of the pool below elevation 2040 feet.

CAPACITY

5.6.3 The spent fuel storage pool is designed and shall be maintained with a storage capacity limited to no more than 1344 fuel assemblies.

5.7 COMPONENT CYCLIC OR TRANSIENT LIMIT

5.7.1 The components identified in Table 5.7-1 are designed and shall be maintained within the cyclic or transient limits of Table 5.7-1.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

CORE OPERATING LIMITS REPORT (COLR) (Continued)

Nuclear Enthalpy Rise Hot Channel Factor - $F_{\Delta H}^N$ Specification 3.9.1.b - Refueling Boron Concentration).

- j. NRC Safety Evaluation Reports dated July 1, 1991, "Acceptance for Referencing of Topical Report WCAP-12610, 'VANTAGE+ Fuel Assembly Reference Core Report' (TAC NO. 77258)," and September 15, 1994, "Acceptance for Referencing of Topical Report WCAP-12610, Appendix B, Addendum 1, 'Extended Burnup Fuel Design Methodology and ZIRLO Fuel Performance Models' (TAC No. M86416)" (WCAP-12610-P-A)
(Methodology for Specification 3.2.2 - Heat Flux Hot Channel Factor - $F_0(Z)$)

The core operating limits shall be determined so that all applicable limits (e.g., fuel thermal-hydraulic limits, core thermal-hydraulic limits, ECCS limits, nuclear limits such as shutdown margin, and transient and accident analysis limits) of the safety analysis are met.

The CORE OPERATING LIMITS REPORT, including any mid-cycle revisions or supplements thereto, shall be provided upon issuance, for each reload cycle, to the NRC Document Control Desk with copies to the Regional Administrator and Resident Inspector.

SPECIAL REPORTS

6.9.2 Special reports shall be submitted to the Regional Administrator of the NRC Regional Office within the time period specified for each report.

6.10 RECORD RETENTION

In addition to the applicable record retention requirements of Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, the following records shall be retained for at least the minimum period indicated.

6.10.1 The following records shall be retained for at least 5 years:

- a. Records and logs of unit operation covering time interval at each power level;
- b. Records and logs of principal maintenance activities, inspections, repair and replacement of principal items of equipment related to nuclear safety;
- c. ALL REPORTABLE EVENTS;
- d. Records of surveillance activities, inspections, and calibrations required by these Technical Specifications;
- e. Records of changes made to the procedures required by Specification 6.8.1;
- f. Records of radioactive shipments;
- g. Records of sealed source and fission detector leak tests and results; and
- h. Records of annual physical inventory of all sealed source material of record.

RECORD RETENTION (Continued)

6.10.2 The following records shall be retained for the duration of the Unit Operating License:

- a. Records and drawing changes reflecting unit design modifications made to systems and equipment described in the Final Safety Analysis Report;
- b. Records of new and irradiated fuel inventory, fuel transfers and assembly burnup histories;
- c. Records of radiation exposure for all individuals entering radiation control areas;
- d. Records of gaseous and liquid radioactive material released to the environs;
- e. Records of transient or operational cycles for those Unit components identified in Table 5.7-1;
- f. Records of reactor tests and experiments;
- g. Records of training and qualification for current members of the Unit Staff;
- h. Records of in-service inspections performed pursuant to these Technical Specifications;
- i. Records of Quality Assurance activities required by the QA Manual;
- j. Records of reviews performed for changes made to procedures or equipment or reviews of tests and experiments pursuant to 10 CFR 50.59;
- k. Records of meetings of the PSRC and the NSRC;
- l. Records of the service lives of all hydraulic and mechanical snubbers required by Specification 3.7.8 including the date at which the service life commences and associated installation and maintenance records;
- m. Records of secondary water sampling and water quality; and
- n. Records of analysis required by the Radiological Environmental Monitoring Program that would permit evaluation of the accuracy of the analysis at a later date. This should include procedures effective at specified times and QA records showing that these procedures were followed.
- o. Records of reviews performed for changes made to the OFFSITE DOSE CALCULATION MANUAL and the PROCESS CONTROL PROGRAM.



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 110 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-42

WOLF CREEK NUCLEAR OPERATING CORPORATION

WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION

DOCKET NO. 50-482

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter of July 3, 1997, Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC), the licensee, submitted a request for changes to the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS) Technical Specifications (TSs) 5.3.1 and 6.1.9.6. The requested changes would modify WCGS TSs 5.3.1, "Fuel Assemblies", and 6.1.9.6, "Core Operating Limits Report (COLR)" to add ZIRLO as fuel cladding material, the use of limited zirconium alloy filler rods in place of fuel rods, and allow the limited use of lead test assemblies in non-limiting core positions.

The Westinghouse ZIRLO fuel was described in Topical Report WCAP-12610 "VANTAGE+ Fuel Assembly Reference Core Report," and was approved by the NRC staff for irradiation up to 60,000 MWD/MTU rod average burnup (Wolf Creek's current burnup limit). Extensive testing has been conducted by Westinghouse through lead test assembly (LTA) programs and was selected as reload fuel by other utilities.

2.0 EVALUATION

TS 5.3.1 requires fuel rods to be constructed with Zircaloy. Zircaloy or stainless steel filler rods may be substituted in place of fuel rods and justified by cycle-specific reload analysis. The proposed amendment would modify TS 5.3.1 to allow fuel rods to be constructed with ZIRLO and to allow fuel assembly reconstitution with Zirconium alloy, i.e., Zircaloy or ZIRLO, filler rods and allow a limited number of LTAs in non-limiting core positions. The use of other zirconium alloys would require an exemption from 10 CFR 50.46 in that only Zircaloy and ZIRLO are identified in that regulation.

TS 6.1.9.6 lists the analytical methods, which have been reviewed and approved by the NRC, that are used to determine the core operating limits. The licensee proposes to add a reference to the NRC issued Safety Evaluation Reports that approved the use of Westinghouse report WCAP-12610-P-A, "VANTAGE+ Fuel Assembly Reference Core Report," to TS 6.1.9.6 to reflect the methodology used for the rod heatup calculation in the LOCA evaluation models with ZIRLO clad fuel.

The staff approved the ZIRLO fuel design in a safety evaluation dated July 1, 1991, of Westinghouse Topical Report WCAP-12610. The NRC staff also approved loss of coolant accident (LOCA) methodologies in another safety evaluation, dated October 9, 1991, of Westinghouse Topical Reports WCAP-12610,

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Appendix F, "LOCA NOTRUMP Evaluation Model: ZIRLO Modifications," and Appendix G, "LOCA Plant-Specific Accident Evaluation." The July 1, 1991, safety evaluation concluded that:

- a. The mechanical design bases and limits for ZIRLO clad fuel assembly design are the same as those for the previously licensed Zircaloy-4 clad fuel assembly design, except those specified for clad corrosion.
- b. The neutronic evaluations have shown that ZIRLO clad fuel nuclear design bases are satisfied and that key safety parameter limits are applicable. The nuclear design models and methods accurately describe the behavior of ZIRLO clad fuel.
- c. The thermal and hydraulic design basis for ZIRLO clad fuel is unchanged.
- d. The methods and computer codes used in the analysis of the non-LOCA licensing-basis events are valid for ZIRLO clad fuel, and all licensing-basis criteria will be met.
- e. The large-break LOCA evaluation model was modified to reflect the behavior of the ZIRLO clad material during a LOCA. Consequently, the revised evaluation model satisfies 10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K of 10 CFR Part 50.

In the October 9, 1991, safety evaluation for WCAP-12610, Appendices F and G, the NRC concluded that the LOCA analyses and methods used demonstrated conformance with the criteria given in 10 CFR 50.46 and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K. The safety evaluation stated that its conclusions were based upon the close similarity between the material properties of the ZIRLO alloy of zirconium to those of other zirconium materials that have been previously licensed for use as cladding material. Based on this similarity, the NRC staff found that it is appropriately conservative to apply the criteria of 10 CFR 50.46 and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, when reviewing VANTAGE+ (ZIRLO) fuel applications, including WCAP-12610, Appendices F and G. The staff finds that the cited findings from the July 1 and October 9, 1991, safety evaluations apply to the use of ZIRLO at WCGS.

The proposed change to allow the use of ZIRLO is intended to remedy the phenomenon of incomplete rod insertion, which has been experienced at the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS). In-vessel compressive loading and irradiation growth of the fuel assembly guide tubes have been determined to be the cause of incomplete insertion. The material of the guide tubes is being changed to ZIRLO for better dimensional stability and corrosion resistance, as well as compatibility with the fuel assembly skeleton.

Changing to ZIRLO cladding will also inhibit in-core fuel rod corrosion, which studies have shown to be of concern relative to high burnup fuel and longer cycles.

The bounding analysis for large and small break LOCA rod heatup cases were evaluated by the licensee for the WCGS. In all cases, the acceptance criteria were met, including those in 10 CFR 50.46, and an adequate margin to the peak clad temperature limit of 2200 °F is maintained.

The effect of ZIRLO on non-LOCA analyses were also evaluated by the licensee. Two events, rod ejection and locked rotor, were determined to be potentially affected. The results of the evaluations demonstrated that all acceptance criteria continue to be met.

The change from Zircaloy-4 to ZIRLO is consistent with 10 CFR 50.44 and 10 CFR 50.46 which contains standards and criteria for fuel clad with Zircaloy or ZIRLO. The change is also consistent with NRC-approved topical report WCAP-13060, "Westinghouse Fuel Assembly Reconstitution Evaluation Methodology," which sets forth the methodology used to evaluate the applicable design criteria associated with filler rods and, meets the intent of Supplement 1 of Generic Letter 90-02, "Alternative Requirements for Assemblies in the Design Sections of Technical Specifications." NUREG-1431, "Standard Technical Specifications for Westinghouse Plants," specifically includes ZIRLO as an acceptable cladding material. Thus, the NRC staff concludes that the use of ZIRLO clad fuel at WCGS is acceptable.

Technical Specification Changes

Section 5.3 Reactor Core, Fuel Assemblies 5.3.1

Technical Specification 5.3.1 has been rewritten to agree with Section 4.2.1 of the Westinghouse Standard Technical Specifications (NUREG-1431, Rev. 1) as follows:

"The reactor shall contain 193 fuel assemblies. Each assembly shall consist of a matrix of Zircaloy or ZIRLO clad fuel rods with an initial composition of natural or slightly enriched uranium dioxide (UO₂) as fuel material. Limited substitutions of zirconium alloy or stainless steel filler rods for fuel rods, in accordance with approved applications of fuel rod configurations, may be used. Fuel assemblies shall be limited to those fuel designs that have been analyzed with applicable NRC approved codes and methods and shown by test or analyses to comply with all fuel safety design bases. A limited number of lead test assemblies that have not completed representative testing may be placed in non-limiting core regions."

The staff interprets the term "zirconium alloy" in the discussion of the substitution of filler rods for fuel rods to include only ZIRLO and Zircaloy.

As required by the TS, lead test assemblies that are inserted in the reactor core must have been analyzed using NRC approved codes and methods to show that all fuel safety design bases will be met. This is in agreement with the staff's guidance in Generic Letter 90-02, Supplement 1, "Alternate Requirements for Fuel Assemblies in the Design Features Section of Technical Specifications." The staff finds this change acceptable.

On the basis of its evaluation of the acceptability of ZIRLO for WCGS, the NRC staff concludes that the proposed changes to WCGS TS 5.3.1 are acceptable.

Core Operating Limits Report, Section 6.9.1.6b

The licensee also proposed to add references to the NRC issued Safety Evaluation Reports, dated July 1, 1991 and September 15, 1994, that approved the use of Westinghouse Topical Report WCAP-12610 for a LOCA evaluation model with ZIRLO clad fuel for rod heatup calculation (Methodology for Specification 3.2.2 - Heat Flux Hot Channel Factor).

This proposed reference will provide that the analytical methods used to determine the core operating limits shall be reviewed and approved by the NRC staff. The use of NRC-approved methodologies will ensure that values for cycle specific parameters are determined such that applicable limits (e.g., fuel thermal-hydraulic limits, core thermal-hydraulic limits, ECCS limits, nuclear limits such as shutdown margin, and transient and accident analysis limits) of the safety analysis are met. The added topical report appropriately models the core performance at WCGS. With this addition, the analytical methodologies referenced in Section 6.1.9 of the Wolf Creek TS are appropriate for calculating the limits associated with ZIRLO clad fuel and reconstituted fuel using ZIRLO or stainless steel filler rods. Therefore, the staff finds the modification to Section 6.1.9.6b acceptable for WCGS.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's submittal regarding the use of ZIRLO clad fuel and the associated TS changes and, on the basis of its evaluation, the staff concludes that the proposed changes to the TS and the COLR meet the related requirements of 10 CFR 50.46; 10 CFR 50, Appendix K; and 10 CFR 50.44, and are therefore acceptable.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Kansas State Official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (62 FR 40860). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). The amendment also involves changes in recordkeeping, reporting or administrative procedures or requirements. Accordingly, with respect to these items, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical

exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(10). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Principal Contributor: A. Attard

Date: September 22, 1997