

January 11, 1993

Docket No. 50-446

Mr. William J. Cahill, Jr.
Group Vice President, Nuclear
TU Electric
400 North Olive Street, L.B. 81
Dallas, Texas 75201

Dear Mr. Cahill:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT -
COMANCHE PEAK STEAM ELECTRIC STATION, UNIT NO. 2 (TAC NO. M85248)

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" for your information. This assessment relates to the application from TU Electric dated December 18, 1992, requesting an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24 concerning criticality monitors in areas where fuel assemblies are stored and handled. A similar exemption was requested for Unit 1 by TU Electric letter dated June 30, 1989. The staff granted this exemption for Unit 1 and the evaluation is contained in our Safety Evaluation Report, Supplement No. 22. The Unit 2 exemption request references the Unit 1 request, stating that Unit 2 utilizes the same facilities, systems, and controls as Unit 1 in storing and handling fuel. The staff's evaluation of this request for Unit 2 will be published in our Safety Evaluation Report, Supplement No. 26.

The assessment has been forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,
Original Signed By

Brian E. Holian, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Environmental Assessment

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

*For previous concurrences
see attached ORC

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Mr. William J. Cahill, Jr.

- 2 -

January 11, 1993

cc w/enclosure:
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Honorable Dale McPherson
County Judge
P. O. Box 851
Glen Rose, Texas 76043

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONTU ELECTRIC UTILITIES COMPANYDOCKET NO. 50-446COMANCHE PEAK STEAM ELECTRIC STATION, UNIT NO. 2ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering the issuance of an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24 to TU Electric (the applicant). The exemption would apply to the facility operating license for the Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Unit 2 (the facility) located in Somervell County, Texas. A similar exemption was requested for Unit 1 by letter dated June 30, 1989. The Unit 1 exemption was granted by the NRC staff and the evaluation is contained in Safety Evaluation Report (NUREG-0797), Supplement No. 22.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action

The proposed action would allow an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24 for the operation of Comanche Peak, Unit 2 in response to the applicant's request dated December 18, 1992.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The exemption from 10 CFR 70.24 would allow irradiated or unirradiated fuel assemblies to be handled and stored in the Comanche Peak fuel handling building without having a monitoring system which will energize clearly audible alarms if accidental criticality occurs. This exemption will be deemed acceptable provided that no more than two fuel assemblies are outside an approved shipping container, storage rack, or fuel transfer tube at any time and a minimum 12-inch, edge-to-edge distance is maintained between such

assemblies. The proposed exemption is needed to permit fueling and refueling operations at Comanche Peak without the criticality monitoring systems specified by 10 CFR 70.24(a).

TU Electric's Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Unit 1, currently has an exemption from the criticality monitoring requirements of 10 CFR 70.24. The fuel handling system and storage racks are common equipment to both units; and the refueling procedures are dual unit procedures. The design and administrative controls applicable to Unit 1 to preclude inadvertent criticality will be similarly applied to Unit 2.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

There are no environmental impacts of the proposed action. Criticality will be precluded by the restriction that no more than two fuel assemblies shall be authorized to be outside of an approved shipping container, storage rack, or the fuel transfer tube at any one time and a minimum 12-inch, edge-to-edge distance is maintained between such assemblies. Because these measures provide assurance that criticality will not occur during receipt, inspection, or storage of fuel, this is an acceptable alternative to a monitoring system. Since the proposed exemption does not otherwise affect radiological plant effluents nor cause any significant occupational exposures, the Commission concludes that there are no radiological environmental impacts associated with this proposed exemption.

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed exemption involves systems located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. The proposed exemption does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact.

Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

The Commission has concluded that there are no measurable environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption. The principal alternative would be for the Commission to deny the requested exemption. This would not reduce the environmental impacts of the plant operation.

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 Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 dated September 1981 and Supplement dated October 1989.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

The NRC staff reviewed the applicant's request and did not consult other agencies or persons.

FINDINGS OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption. Based upon the environmental assessment, the NRC staff 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 action, see the applicant's letter dated December 18, 1992. The letter is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555 and at the University of Texas at

Arlington Library, Government Publications/Maps, 701 South Cooper, P. O. Box
19497, Arlington, Texas 76019.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 11th day of January 1993.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne C. Black".

Suzanne C. Black, Director
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation