



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. 04-166

December 30, 2004

NRC RENEWS LICENSE FOR INTERIM SPENT FUEL STORAGE INSTALLATION AT G.E. MORRIS FACILITY IN ILLINOIS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the license for the General Electric Co. to continue operating its Morris independent spent nuclear fuel storage installation located in Grundy County, Illinois, for an additional 20 years.

The renewal allows G.E. Morris to continue operating through May 2022. The facility's original 20-year license expired in May 2002; however, it was allowed to continue operating because GE had already filed its renewal request with the NRC. All of the fuel that is stored at the facility has been cooling for more than 20 years, and the new license does not authorize the facility to receive more fuel.

In a safety evaluation report and environmental analysis issued earlier this month, the NRC concluded the facility could continue safe operation without significant impacts on the environment. Not renewing the license would require the facility to be decommissioned and the fuel transferred to another facility to await eventual disposal in a federal repository.

“The G.E. Morris facility meets all NRC requirements for the continued safe storage of spent fuel in a manner that protects the public health and safety and the environment,” said Larry Camper, deputy director of the NRC's Spent Fuel Project Office.

The G.E. Morris facility is the only “away from reactor” spent fuel pool licensed by the NRC. The other 29 independent spent fuel installations use dry-cask storage, and most are located at reactor sites. GE originally intended to operate a fuel reprocessing plant at the site.

This is the first time the NRC has renewed a license for an independent spent fuel storage installation. Earlier this month the agency indicated it intends to issue a new license for the dry-cask storage installation at the Surry nuclear power plant in Virginia. That license will not be issued until appropriate safety-related license conditions are agreed to by the NRC and Surry's operator, Dominion Generation. Dominion applied for a 40-year license as an exemption from NRC regulations, which specify a 20-year license term. GE did not request a similar exemption.

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