NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
DOCKET NO. 030-05233
October 20, 2005

Environmental Assessment Related to Issuance of a License Amendment
of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Materials License No. 29-00304-02,
Conopco, Inc., d.b.a. Unilever Research and Development (Unilever), in Edgewater, New Jersey

Introduction

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has prepared this environmental assessment of the termination of Conopco, Inc.'s, d.b.a. Unilever Research and Development (Unilever), Materials License Number 29-00304-02, and the release of its Edgewater, New Jersey, facility for unrestricted use. The facility is operated by Unilever in Edgewater, New Jersey. Unilever was authorized by NRC from 1956 to 2005 to use radioactive materials for research and development purposes at the site. In 2005, Unilever ceased operations with licensed material at the Edgewater, New Jersey, site and requested that NRC terminate the license. Unilever has conducted surveys of the facility and determined that the facility meets the license termination criteria in Subpart E of 10 CFR Part 20. The NRC staff has evaluated Unilever's request and the results of the surveys, and has developed an environmental assessment (EA) in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR Part 51. Based on the staff evaluation, the conclusion of the EA is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on human health and the environment for the proposed licensing action.

Unilever requested release for unrestricted use of two buildings at 45 River Road, Edgewater, New Jersey, as authorized by the NRC License No. 29-00304-02, and termination of the license. The two buildings contain a combined 55,612 square feet of general office and laboratory space located in a commercial area. Approximately 2,700 square feet of this space was used for licensed activities.

License No. 29-00304-02 was issued in 1958, superceding License No. 29-00304-01, and amended periodically since that time. NRC-licensed activities performed at the Edgewater, New Jersey, site were limited to laboratory procedures typically performed on bench tops and in hoods using a variety of radio nuclides. No outdoor areas were affected by the use of licensed materials.

The Proposed Action

The proposed action is to terminate Materials License No. 29-00304-02 and release the facility at 45 River Road, Edgewater, New Jersey, for unrestricted use. By letter dated May 23, 2005, Unilever stated that no further actions are required to rededicate the facility, and requested release of the facility for unrestricted use and termination of the license. Unilever stated that licensed activities ceased completely in February 2005. Based on the licensee's historical knowledge of the site and the conditions of the facility, the licensee determined that only routine decontamination activities, in accordance with licensee radiation safety procedures, were required. A decommissioning plan was not required to be submitted to the NRC. The licensee surveyed the facility, decontaminated or rededicated areas as needed, and provided

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documentation that the facility meets the license termination criteria specified in Subpart E of 10 CFR Part 20, and does not require additional decommissioning activities to be performed. The licensee demonstrated this using the screening criteria described in 65 FR 37186.

Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to amend NRC Materials License No. 29-00304-02, to allow for the release of 45 River Road, Edgewater, New Jersey, for unrestricted use and terminate the license. The licensee needs this license change because it no longer plans to conduct licensed activities at this facility. NRC is fulfilling its responsibilities under the Atomic Energy Act to make a timely decision on a proposed license amendment for release of facilities for unrestricted use and termination of a license that ensures protection of public health and safety and the environment. The licensee has requested the action to reduce their regulatory burden since they no longer intend to conduct licensed activities at this location.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The affected environment was described in the Introduction. The licensee has completed all rededication at the site. The NRC staff has reviewed the surveys performed by Unilever to demonstrate compliance with the 10 CFR 20.1402 license termination criteria. Based on its review, the staff has determined that the affected environment and environmental impacts associated with the release for unrestricted use of the Unilever facilities are bounded by the impacts evaluated by the “Generic Environmental Impact Statement in Support of Rulemaking on Radiological Criteria for License Termination of NRC-Licensed Nuclear Facilities” (NUREG-1496). The staff also finds that the proposed release for unrestricted use of the Unilever facilities is in compliance with Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.1402, “Radiological Criteria for Unrestricted Use.” The NRC has found no other activities in the area that could result in cumulative impacts.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the facility at the Edgewater, New Jersey, site has already been surveyed and found acceptable for release for unrestricted use, the only alternative to the proposed action of termination of the license and release of the Edgewater site for unrestricted use is denial of the proposed action (i.e. no action). Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

The NRC staff has determined that the proposed action will not affect listed species or critical habitat. Therefore, no further consultation is required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Likewise, the NRC staff have determined that the proposed action is not the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Therefore, no further consultation is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

NRC provided a draft of its Environmental Assessment to the State of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection for review. On September 13, 2005, the Department of Environmental Protection responded by letter and agreed with the conclusions of the EA.

Conclusions

Based on its review, the NRC staff has concluded that the completed action complies with 10 CFR Part 20. The NRC staff have prepared this EA in support of the proposed action to terminate License No. 29-00304-02. On the basis of the EA, NRC has concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts and the license amendment does not warrant the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Accordingly, it has been determined that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

List of Preparers

Betsy Ullrich, Senior Health Physicist, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, Region I

List of References

1. NRC License No. 29-00304-02 inspection and licensing records.

2. Final Status Survey Report, Unilever Research and Development - Edgewater (URDE), Edgewater, New Jersey, NRC License No. 29-00304-02, May 2005 [ADAMS Accession Nos. ML051780048, ML051780060, ML051780061, ML051780068, ML051780093, ML051780095, ML051780096, ML051780097, ML051780098, ML051780100, ML051780102, ML051780103, and ML051780105].

3. Federal Register Notice, Volume 65, No. 114, page 37186, dated Tuesday, June 13, 2000, "Use of Screening Values to Demonstrate Compliance With The Federal Rule on Radiological Criteria for License Termination."

4. Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20, Subpart E, "Radiological Criteria for License Termination."

5. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions."

6. NUREG-1496, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement in Support of Rulemaking on Radiological Criteria for License Termination of NRC-Licensed Nuclear Facilities."

The application for the license amendment and supporting documentation are available for inspection at NRC's Public Electronic Reading Room at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html. Any questions with respect to this action should be referred to Betsy Ullrich, Commercial and R&D Branch, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, Region I, 475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406, telephone (610) 337-5040, fax (610) 337-5269.

Dated at King of Prussia, Pennsylvania this 20th day of October 2005

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

/RA/

James P. Dwyer, Chief
Commercial and R&D Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety
Region I

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