PUBLIC NOTICE

THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION PROPOSES TO AMEND THE RENEWED FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE FOR THE COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) has received an application dated May 15, 2015 (available at Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML15135A463), as supplemented by letter dated May 19, 2015 (ADAMS Accession No. ML15139A634), from Energy Northwest (the licensee), for an exigent amendment to the renewed facility operating license for the Columbia Generating Station (CGS), located in Benton County, Washington.

The proposed amendment would extend the implementation period for a previous amendment to the CGS renewed facility operating license, Amendment No. 232, which was issued by the NRC on March 27, 2015 (ADAMS Accession No. ML15063A010). Amendment No. 232 was effective as of its date of issuance (i.e., on March 27, 2015) and was required to be implemented prior to CGS restarting from refueling outage R-22, scheduled for spring 2015. However, the implementation period of Amendment No. 232 cannot be met due to unforeseen equipment test qualification delays associated with replacement AMETEK trip units. Therefore, by letter dated May 15, 2015, as supplemented by letter dated May 19, 2015, the licensee requested that the implementation period for Amendment No. 232 be extended to prior to CGS restarting from refueling outage R-23, scheduled for spring 2017.

Amendment No. 232 changed the CGS license by revising Technical Specification (TS) Table 3.3.1.1-1, “Reactor Protection System Instrumentation,” Functions 7.a and 7.b, as follows: For Function 7.a, it changed the term “Transmitter/Trip Unit” to “Transmitter/Level Indicating Switch” and added Surveillance Requirement (SR) 3.3.1.1.1 to require the performance of a Channel Check every 12 hours; and for Function 7.b, it changed the term “Float Switch” to

"Transmitter/Level Switch" and added footnotes (d) and (e) to SR 3.3.1.1.10 for the new scram discharge instrumentation. The purpose of these changes was to more accurately describe the existing instrument's indication capability, to correct the inadvertent omission of an SR for Function 7.a, and to reflect the planned replacement of existing Magnetrol Level Float Switches with the comparably reliable and more accurate level transmitters and associated trip units for Function 7.b. The addition of footnotes (d) and (e) to SR 3.3.1.1.10 of Function 7.b is in accordance with Option A of the TS Task Force (TSTF) change traveler TSTF-493, Revision 4, "Clarify Application of Setpoint Methodology for LSSS [limiting safety system settings] Functions" (ADAMS Accession No. ML100060064).

The licensee requested that the proposed amendment be processed on an exigent basis, in accordance with the provisions in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 50.91(a)(6). Under 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6)(i)(B), where the Commission finds that exigent circumstances exist, in that a licensee and the Commission must act quickly and that time does not permit the Commission to publish a *Federal Register* notice allowing 30 days for prior public comment, and it also determines that the amendment involves no significant hazards considerations, the Commission will use local media to provide reasonable notice to the public in the area surrounding a licensee's facility of the licensee's amendment and of its proposed determination that no significant hazards consideration is involved, consulting with the licensee on the proposed media release and on the geographical area of its coverage.

The licensee's claim of exigent circumstances is based on the considerations below. The licensee encountered unforeseen difficulties and delays in qualifying the new scram discharge volume instrumentation electronic level switches, referred to as AMETEK trip units. The trip units required commercial grade dedication by a qualified vendor in order to be qualified for safety-related applications. Receipt of the parts from the vendor was significantly delayed,

and the trip units had been modified by the vendor to obtain acceptable electromagnetic interference and radiofrequency interference testing to meet NRC Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.180, Revision 1, “Guidelines for Evaluating Electromagnetic and Radio-Frequency Interference in Safety-Related Instrumentation and Control Systems” (ADAMS Accession No. ML032740277). Due to the modifications, the licensee had to re-evaluate the suitability of the new instruments and discovered that the modification and external wiring requirements for the trip units received from the vendor were incompatible and required requalification to match the plant configuration. As a result, the trip units must be returned to the vendor for reconfiguration, dedication, and requalification, which has delayed implementation of the proposed design change until the next refueling outage.

As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration using the standards in 10 CFR 50.92. The licensee and the NRC have evaluated this proposed change with regard to the determination of whether or not a significant hazards consideration is involved.

Operation of CGS in accordance with the proposed amendment would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. The proposed amendment’s implementation schedule extension is administrative in nature and does not require any physical plant modifications, physically affect any plant systems or components, or entail changes in plant operation. The proposed amendment’s implementation schedule extension does not increase the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated in the CGS Final Safety Analysis Report. The change in the implementation schedule of the scram discharge volume instrumentation float switches and TS changes will have no impact on the initiation or the consequences of any accidents previously evaluated. TS requirements that govern operability or routine testing of plant instruments are not assumed to

be initiators of any analyzed event. The change in implementation schedule will not increase the consequences of an accident since the existing scram discharge volume instrumentation is in accordance with the plant's design and licensing bases. All acceptance criteria continue to be met. Therefore, the proposed amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The proposed amendment would not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously analyzed. There are no postulated hazards, new or different, contained in the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment's implementation schedule extension is administrative in nature and does not require any physical plant modifications, physically affect any plant systems or components, or entail changes in plant operation. Therefore, the proposed amendment does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

The proposed amendment would not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. Margin of safety is related to the confidence in the ability of the fission product barriers (i.e., fuel cladding, reactor coolant pressure boundary, and containment) to limit the level of radiation dose to the public. The proposed amendment's implementation schedule extension is administrative in nature and does not require any physical plant modifications, physically affect any plant systems or components, or entail changes in plant operation. The existing scram discharge volume instrumentation maintains the required redundancy, diversity, and capability to ensure that there is sufficient volume available to accommodate a reactor scram. Therefore, the proposed amendment does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

Following an initial review of this application, the requested amendment has been evaluated against the standards in 10 CFR 50.92 and the NRC has made a proposed (preliminary) determination that the requested amendment involves no significant hazards

considerations. Operation of CGS in accordance with the proposed amendment would not significantly increase the probability or consequences of any accident previously considered, nor create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident, nor significantly reduce any margin of safety.

If the proposed determination that the requested exigent license amendment involves no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the NRC will issue the amendment without first offering an opportunity for a public hearing. An opportunity for a hearing will be published in the *Federal Register* at a later date and any hearing request will not delay the effective date of the amendment.

If the NRC decides in its final determination that the requested exigent license amendment does involve a significant hazards consideration, a notice of opportunity for a prior hearing will be published in the *Federal Register* and, if a hearing is granted, it will be held before the amendment is issued.

Comments on the proposed determination of no significant hazards consideration may be (1) telephoned to Mr. Michael T. Markley, Chief, Plant Licensing Branch IV-1, by collect call to 301-415-5723, or by facsimile to 301-415-2102, (2) e-mailed to Michael.Markley@nrc.gov, or (3) submitted in writing to the Chief, Rules, Announcements and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop: OWFN-12-H08, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. All comments received by 5:00 p.m. on June 8, 2015, will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application as well as all of the other documents referenced above may be examined electronically through the ADAMS in the NRC Library at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html by using the provided "Accession No." and at the Commission's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, Public File Area O1-F21, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland.

Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS should contact the NRC PDR reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209, or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to PDR.Resource@nrc.gov.