



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

March 1, 2017

John A. Dent, Jr.
Site Vice President
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station
600 Rocky Hill Road
Plymouth, MA 02360-5508

SUBJECT: PILGRIM NUCLEAR POWER STATION – ACCEPTANCE OF REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM SPECIFIC PROVISIONS IN TITLE 10 OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS 73.55 (CAC NO. MF9274)

Dear Mr. Dent:

By letter dated November 10, 2015 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML15328A053), the licensee submitted Notification of Permanent Cessation of Power Operations for the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station (PNPS). In this letter, Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. (Entergy or the licensee) provided notification to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) of its intent to permanently cease power operations no later than June 1, 2019. After certifications of permanent cessation of power operations and permanent removal of fuel from the reactor vessel for PNPS are submitted in accordance with Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) 50.82(a)(1)(i) and (ii), the 10 CFR 50 license will no longer authorize reactor operation or placement or retention of fuel in the reactor vessel. As a result, licensed reactor operators will no longer be required to support plant operating activities. Entergy intends to have certified fuel handlers (CFHs) perform activities associated with decommissioning and irradiated fuel handling and management.

By letter dated February 7, 2017 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17045A468), Entergy submitted its request for exemption from specific provisions in 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power reactors against radiological sabotage," for PNPS to the NRC for approval.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the NRC staff's acceptance review of this licensing action request. The acceptance review was performed to determine if there is sufficient technical information in scope and depth to allow the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review. The acceptance review is also intended to identify whether the application has any readily apparent information insufficiencies in its characterization of the regulatory requirements or the licensing basis of the plant.

The licensee requested NRC grant an exemption from specific provisions in 10 CFR 73.55 related to the suspension of security measures in an emergency or during severe weather for PNPS. The regulations in 10 CFR 73.55(p)(1)(i) and (ii) require that the suspension of security measures be approved by a licensed senior operator before taking this action. Entergy is requesting an exemption from these rules to allow either a licensed senior operator or a CFH to approve the suspension of security measures following the submittal of the certifications of permanent cessation of operations and permanent removal of fuel from the reactor vessel in accordance with 10 CFR 50.82(a)(1)(i) and (ii).

The NRC staff has reviewed your application and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review and make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed licensing action in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment. Given the lesser scope and depth of the acceptance review as compared to the detailed technical review, there may be instances in which issues that impact the NRC staff's ability to complete the detailed technical review are identified, despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. You will be advised of any further information needed to support the NRC staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence.

Based on the information provided in your submittal, the NRC staff has estimated that this licensing request will take approximately 105 hours to complete. The NRC staff expects to complete this review in approximately 12 months, which is February 2018. If there are emergent complexities or challenges in our review that would cause changes to the initial forecasted completion date or significant changes in the forecasted hours, the reasons for the changes, along with the new estimates, will be communicated during the routine interactions with the assigned project manager.

These estimates are based on the NRC staff's initial review of the application and they could change, due to several factors including requests for additional information, and unanticipated addition of scope to the review. Additional delay may occur if the submittal is provided to the NRC in advance or in parallel with industry program initiatives or pilot applications.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-3100 or John.Lamb@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John G. Lamb". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

John G. Lamb, Senior Project Manager
Special Projects and Process Branch
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-293

cc: Distribution via Listserv

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ADAMS Accession Number: ML17047A168

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