UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

NIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATION

DOCKET NO. 50-220

NINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR STATION UNIT NO. 1

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Paragraph III.D.1.(a), Type A Tests, issued to Facility Operating License No. DPR-63, the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (the licensee) for operation of the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit No. 1, located in Oswego, New York.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to address potential environmental issues related to the licensee's application of August 26, 1994. The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Paragraph III.D.1.(a), to the extent that a one-time schedular extension would permit the second 10-year period for performance of the third Type A test be extended to correspond with the end of the current inservice inspection interval (ISI).

The Need for the Proposed Action:

During the first 10-year service period (1974-1984) Type A tests were conducted as required by 10 CFR 50 Appendix J. Due to the lengthy outage for the replacement of reactor recirculation piping, the first ISI 10-year

interval was extended to June 1986. In addition, an extended refueling outage (January 1987 to July 1990), caused the second 10-year ISI interval to be extended to December 1998. These actions decoupled the Type A test schedule from the ISI schedule.

Unlike Section XI of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (ASME Code), Appendix J of 10 CFR Part 50 does not contain any provisions for adjusting the 10-year service period for extended outages. Two Type A tests have already been performed (May 1990 and April 1993) during the current second 10-year service period. The current 10-year service period ends December 1994. The next refueling outage (RF013) is currently scheduled for February 1995. Performing the Type A test during the 1995 refueling outage would result in only 22 months of operation since the last Type A test. Appendix J could be interpreted to require another Type A test during the last outage in the ISI interval. NMPC has proposed to extend the second 10-year service period to correspond with the end of the current ISI interval. Due to Nine Mile Point Unit 1's 24-month operating cycle, the final refueling outage of the current ISI interval is scheduled for 1997 (RF014).

Granting the proposed Exemption would result in an interval of approximately 46 months between successive Type A tests. Such an interval would be consistent with the NRC staff's current position (as reflected in the NRC's Improved Standard Technical Specifications, NUREG-1433) of requiring Type A tests to be performed every 40 ± 10 months. It would also bring the Appendix J Type A test schedule back into alignment with the 10-year ISI schedule.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The proposed one-time exemption would not increase the probability or consequences of accidents previously analyzed and the proposed one-time exemption would not affect facility radiation levels or facility radiological effluents. The licensee has analyzed the results of previous Type A tests performed at the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit No. 1, and has provided the methodology used in extrapolating the previous Type A test data to the proposed one-time increase in the surveillance interval. The licensee has provided a sound basis for concluding that the proposed one-time extension of the Type A test interval would maintain the containment leakage rates within acceptable limits while bringing the Type A test schedule back into alignment with the 10-year ISI schedule. Accordingly, the Commission has concluded that the one-time extension does not result in a significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released nor does it result in a significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed exemption only involves Type A testing on the containment. They do not affect nonradiological plant effluents and have no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed exemption, any alternatives with equal or

greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request for exemption. Such action would not reduce the environmental impacts of plant operations.

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 Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit No. 1," dated January 1974.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The NRC staff consulted with the New York State official regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's letter dated August 26, 1994, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW.,

Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the White Plains Public Library, 100 Martine Avenue, White Plains, New York 10610.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 30th day of November 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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