



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

July 13, 2017

Vice President, Operations
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Palisades Nuclear Plant
27780 Blue Star Memorial Highway
Covert, MI 49043-9530

SUBJECT: PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT – ACCEPTANCE OF REQUEST FOR
EXEMPTION FROM SPECIFIC PROVISIONS IN SECTION 73.55 OF TITLE 10
OF THE *CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS* (CAC NO. MF9876)

Dear Sir or Madam:

By letter dated January 4, 2017 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML17004A062), the licensee submitted Notification of Permanent Cessation of Power Operations for the Palisades Nuclear Plant (Palisades). 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 October 1, 2018. After certifications of permanent cessation of power operations and permanent removal of fuel from the reactor vessel for Palisades are submitted in accordance with Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), Section 50.82(a)(1)(i) and (ii), the 10 CFR Part 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. Instead, approval of a Certified Fuel Handler Training and Retraining Program is needed to facilitate activities associated with decommissioning and irradiated fuel handling and management.

By letter dated June 29, 2017 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17180A004), Entergy submitted a request for exemption from specific provisions of 10 CFR 73.55, "Requirements for physical protection of licensed activities in nuclear power reactors against radiological sabotage," for Palisades 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 approval of the exemption from specific provisions in 10 CFR 73.55 related to the suspension of security measures in an emergency or during severe weather for Palisades. The regulations under 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 certified fuel handler 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. If additional information is needed, you will be advised by separate correspondence.

Based on the information provided in your submittal, the NRC staff has estimated that this licensing request will take approximately 80 hours to complete. The NRC staff expects to complete this review in approximately 12 months, which is June 27, 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.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-2855 or Scott.Wall@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott P Wall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott P. Wall, Senior Project Manager
Special Projects and Process Branch
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-255

cc: Listserv

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DATED: JULY 13, 2017

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ADAMS Accession No.: ML17184A093

*concurred via e-mail

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