

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONNIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATIONNINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR STATION UNIT 2DOCKET NO. 50-410ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OFNO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuing an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR part 50 to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (the licensee) for the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit 2 (NMP-2), located in Oswego County, New York.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of Proposed Action: The exemption would allow the licensee to delay installation of certain Class 1E protective devices required to meet 10 CFR 50.55a (h), until completion of the first refueling outage.

10 CFR 50.55a (h), "Protective Systems", states that, for construction permits issued after January 1, 1971, [the NMP-2 construction permit was issued June 24, 1974], protective systems shall meet the requirements set forth in editions or revisions of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Standard: "Criteria for Protective Systems for Nuclear Power Generating Stations, "(IEEE-279) in effect on the formal docket date of the application for construction permit. The subject standard states, in part, that equipment used for both protective (Class 1E) and control (non-Class 1E) functions shall be classified as part of the protection system.

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The NMP-2 neutron monitoring system (NMS) uses non-Class 1E protective devices for isolation purposes between Class 1E and non-Class 1E circuits, thereby not meeting the requirements of the regulations discussed above.

The licensee has committed to replace these non-Class 1E devices with Class 1E protective devices for those non-Class 1E circuits connected to Class 1E buses in the NMS.

The applicant's request for a schedular exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.55a (h) for the RPS and the basis therefore, are contained in its letters of June 23, 1987, and June 25, 1987.

Need for proposed Action: The exemption to 10 CFR 50.55a (h) would allow the licensee to operate NMP-2 before the completion of the first refueling outage before replacing the non-Class 1E devices as discussed above. Without this exemption, full power operation of NMP-2 would be delayed.

Environmental Impact of the Proposed Action: This exemption would allow operation of NMP-2 until completion of the first refueling outage before replacing the non-Class 1E devices. The licensee has stated that the non-Class 1E devices discussed above (1) are currently installed in low-energy circuits, (2) are similar to other qualified Class 1E devices, and (3) have satisfactory performance history in currently operating boiling water reactors. For the above reasons, the Commission has determined that the probability of these devices failing in a mode that would jeopardize the ability of this plant to operate and to shut down safely during the period through the completion of the first refueling outage is extremely low. Because of the extremely low probability of such an event, the Commission has determined that there is not a significant



increase in the probability of radiological releases associated with this exemption over that previously determined for Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit 2. Likewise, the relief does not affect non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternative to the Proposed Action: Because the staff has concluded that there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the exemption, any alternative to the exemption will have either no environmental impact or greater environmental impact.

The principal alternative would be to deny the requested exemption. Such action would not reduce environmental impacts of Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station Unit 2 operations, but would result in unwarranted delays in full power operation.

Alternative Use of Resources: This action in the granting of the above exemption does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in connection with the "Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station, Unit No. 2" dated May 1985.

Agencies and Persons Contacted: The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's request that support the requested exemption. The NRC staff did not consult other agencies or persons.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the foregoing environmental assessment, we conclude 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 requested exemption.



For further details with respect to this action, see the request for the exemption dated June 23, 1987, as supplemented June 25, 1987, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20555, and at the Penfield Library, State University College, Oswego, New York 13126.

Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this 25th day of June 1987.



Robert A. Capra, Acting Director
Project Directorate I-1
Division of Reactor Projects, I/II

