

March 20, 1992

Mr. Bart D. Withers
President and Chief Executive Officer
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
Post Office Box 411
Burlington, Kansas 66839

Dear Mr. Withers:

SUBJECT: PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT TO OPERATING
LICENSE FOR WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION (TAC NO. #80234)

The enclosed announcement has been forwarded to the Kansas City Star, Topeka Capital-Journal, Wichita Eagle, Emporia Gazette, Coffey County Today, and This Week for publication. This announcement relates to your application dated March 20, 1992, for an amendment to Facility Operating License No. NPF-42 to extend the date by which the merger of Kansas Gas & Electric Company (KG&E) and Kansas Power and Light (KPL) is required to be completed.

A separate notice will be published later in the Federal Register concerning the revision to the merger date.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

William C. Reckley, Project Manager
Project Directorate IV
Division of Reactor Projects 1/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Announcement

cc w/enclosure:
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Mr. Bart D. Withers

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March 20, 1992

cc:

Jay Silberg, Esq.
Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge
2300 N Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Mr. Chris R. Rogers, P.E.
Manager, Electric Department
Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Regional Administrator, Region III
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
799 Roosevelt Road
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Senior Resident Inspector
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
P. O. Box 311
Burlington, Kansas 66839

Mr. Robert Elliot, Chief Engineer
Utilities Division
Kansas Corporation Commission
1500 SW Arrowhead Road
Topeka, Kansas 66604-4027

Office of the Governor
State of Kansas
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Attorney General
1st Floor - The Statehouse
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Chairman, Coffey County Commission
Coffey County Courthouse
Burlington, Kansas 66839

Mr. Gerald Allen
Public Health Physicist
Bureau of Environmental Health Services
Division of Health
Kansas Department of Health
and Environment
109 SW Ninth
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Mr. Otto Maynard
Director Plant Operations
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
P. O. Box 411
Burlington, Kansas 66839

Regional Administrator, Region IV
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, Texas 76011

Mr. Steven G. Wideman
Supervisor Licensing
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
P. O. Box 411
Burlington, Kansas 66839

Robert Eye, General Council
Kansas Department of Health
and Environment
LSOB, 9th Floor
900 SW Jackson
Topeka, Kansas 66612

NRC STAFF CONSIDERING LICENSE AMENDMENT REQUEST
TO EXTEND KG&E-KPL MERGER COMPLETION DATE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering a request to extend from March 31, 1992, to May 31, 1992, the date when a merger is required to be completed by Kansas Gas and Electric Company (KG&E) and Kansas Power and Light Company (KPL).

This request is contained in an application dated March 20, 1992, for an amendment to the operating license of the Wolf Creek Generating Station near Burlington, Kansas, operated by Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC).

In November 1991, NRC consented to the transfer of KG&E's interest in the Wolf Creek plant to a wholly-owned subsidiary of KPL and amended the facility operating license to reflect that change in ownership. That amendment was to be effective upon completion of the merger, provided that took place on or before March 31, 1992.

Now, however, the proposed merger has been delayed pending the completion of ongoing investigations by WCNOC, which the NRC is monitoring, regarding a noise which occurs during heatups at the Wolf Creek plant. Although the investigation is considered to be nearing completion, it is possible that the merger will be delayed until after March 31, 1992.

Following an initial review of this application, the staff has made a proposed (preliminary) determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under NRC regulations, this means that the proposed amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident, would not

create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident, or involve a significant reduction in a safety margin.

The proposed amendment extending the date by which the merger of KG&E and KPL is required to be completed was found not to adversely impact the analyses performed during the review and subsequent November 19, 1991, approval of the license transfer and associated amendment to the Wolf Creek operating license. Since the facility is operated by Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, acting as an agent for KG&E and the other owners, the merger of KG&E and KPL has no effect on plant equipment or the technical qualification of plant personnel and therefore would not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident. Likewise, since the merger does not involve any change to installed plant equipment or operating procedures and practices, the proposed change does not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated. The partial change in ownership does not affect facility operation or overall organizational commitments and thus does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

If the proposed determination that the requested license amendment involves no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the staff 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 staff decides in its final determination that the 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 telephoned to Suzanne Black, Director, Project Directorate IV-2, by collect call to 1-301-504-1318. All comments received by close of business on March 27, 1992, will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined at the NRC's Local Public Document Rooms located at the Emporia State University, William Allen White Library, 1200 Commercial Street, Emporia, Kansas 66901 and at the Washburn University School of Law Library, Topeka, Kansas 66621.