



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 65

TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-49

NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY, ET AL.

MILLSTONE NUCLEAR POWER STATION, UNIT NO. 3

DOCKET NO. 50-423

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated December 16, 1991, the Northeast Nuclear Energy Company (the licensee), submitted a request for an amendment to the Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 3 Technical Specifications (TS). The requested amendment would change references to the spent fuel pool area radiation monitors in the Technical Specifications to remove any inference that they perform a criticality monitoring function, thereby making the Technical Specifications consistent with the NRC Exemption issued October 18, 1991.

2.0 EVALUATION

By letter dated October 18, 1991, the staff issued an Exemption from 10 CFR 70.24(a) for Millstone Unit 3. The Exemption removed a requirement to have monitoring systems which will energize clearly audible alarms if accidental criticality occurs in the reactor vessel and fuel handling building.

The spent fuel pool monitors serve several functions. The Exemption granted October 18, 1991, thoroughly discussed the criticality monitoring functions which were removed by the Exemption and are no longer required.

The public safety and Technical Specification function of these monitors is to provide an indication of a possible release of high airborne activity into the building such that emergency ventilation systems can be activated to minimize any offsite doses. The other function is for worker protection. The monitor will provide a warning to those in the area upon measurement of high dose rates. This is similar to the purpose of all other area radiation monitors.

There are a number of possible causes for potentially high dose rates including raising highly radioactive components too close to the pool surface, having small fuel fragments inadvertently removed from the pool via hoses or handling tools, or airborne releases due to the rupture of fuel cladding. There is no change in any of the above functions from the proposed change.

The proposed change modifies the description of the fuel pool storage area radiation monitoring instrumentation in Technical Specification Tables 3.3-6 and 4.3-3 from "criticality-radiation level" to simply "radiation level." No change in equipment, setpoints, surveillance requirements, or function is involved, but merely a change in the name by which a certain instrumentation channel is referred to in the Technical Specifications. The old nomenclature, which was appropriate before the October 18, 1991 Exemption was granted, is now misleading. The change removes confusion in nomenclature, and thus enhances safety. Because there are no negative safety impacts from the proposed change, and because the proposed change removes confusion in nomenclature and thus enhances safety, the proposed change is acceptable.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Connecticut State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (57 FR 4490). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

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Date: April 24, 1992