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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NOS. 36 AND 27 TO

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NOS. NPF-76 AND NPF-80

[redacted]GH LIGHTING & POWER COMPANY

CITY PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OF SAN ANTONIO

CENTRAL POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

DOCKET NOS. 50-498 AND 50-499

SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By application dated August 23, 1991 (ST-HL-AE-3844), Houston Lighting & Power Company, et al., (the licensee) requested changes to the Technical Specifications (TS) (Appendix A to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-76 and NPF-80) for the South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2. The proposed changes would remove TS Table 4.4-5 providing the schedule for reactor vessel material specimen withdrawal. Guidance on the proposed TS change was provided by Generic Letter 91-01, "Removal of the Schedule for the Withdrawal of Reactor Vessel Material Specimens from Technical Specifications," of January 4, 1990. The licensee's January 24, 1992, letter requested a 7-day implementation period following the date of issuance of the license amendments.

2.0 EVALUATION

Technical Specification 3/4.4.9, "Pressure/Temperature Limits" contains a Limiting Condition for Operation for the reactor coolant system (RCS) that limits the rate of change in temperature and pressure to values consistent with the fracture toughness requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Code and Appendix G to Part 50 of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR Part 50). Changes in the values of these limits are necessary because the fracture toughness properties of ferritic materials in the reactor vessel change as a function of the reactor operating time (neutron fluence).

For this reason, the TS include a Surveillance Requirement, TS 4.4.9.1.2, to require the removal and examination of the irradiated specimens of reactor vessel material. The licensee examines the specimens to determine the changes

in material properties in accordance with the requirements of Appendix H to 10 CFR Part 50. Table 4.4-5 identifies the material specimens and specifies the schedule for removal of each specimen.

The removal of the schedule for withdrawing material specimens from the TS will eliminate the necessity of a license amendment to make changes to this schedule. However, Section I.B.3 of Appendix H to 10 CFR Part 50 requires the submittal of a proposed withdrawal schedule for material specimens to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and approval by the NRC before implementation. Hence, adequate regulatory controls exist to control changes to this schedule without the necessity of subjecting it to the license amendment process by including it in TS.

The licensee has provided a commitment to include this schedule in the next revision of the Updated Safety Analysis Report (USAR). In addition, the licensee will include any subsequent NRC-approved revisions to this schedule in an update of the USAR. The inclusion of the withdrawal schedule in the USAR provides a source for this information that is readily available as a reference for NRC inspectors and other staff use. Finally, the surveillance requirements for removing material specimens and the bases section for this specification remain unchanged except for the removal of the reference to Table 4.4-5.

The licensee has proposed a change to TS 4.4.9.2 that is consistent with the guidance provided in Generic Letter 91-01 for the removal of Table 4.4-5 from the TS. The NRC has reviewed this matter and finds that the proposed changes to the TS for South Texas Projects, Units 1 and 2 are acceptable.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Texas 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 and changes surveillance requirements. 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 9445). 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: May 6, 1992