



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

May 13, 2020

Mr. Bradley J. Sawatzke  
Chief Executive Officer  
Energy Northwest  
76 North Power Plant Loop  
P.O. Box 968 (Mail Drop 1023)  
Richland, WA 99352-0968

SUBJECT: COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION - PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION  
FOR AMENDMENT TO RENEWED FACILITY OPERATION LICENSE  
(EPID L-2020-LLA-0080)

Dear Mr. Sawatzke:

The enclosed announcement was forwarded to the *Tri-City Herald*, Kennewick, Washington for publication. This announcement relates to Energy Northwest's application dated April 15, 2020 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML20107G972), for an amendment to Renewed Facility Operating License No. NPF-21 for Columbia Generating Station.

The proposed amendment would add a one-time extension of the completion time of Technical Specification Required Actions 3.8.4.G.1, 3.8.7.A.1 and 3.8.7.B.1 to allow repair, replacement of a degraded electrical component support plant operation, and address exigent circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have any questions, please call me at 301-415-5136 or by e-mail at [John.Klos@nrc.gov](mailto:John.Klos@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

L. John Klos, Project Manager  
Plant Licensing Branch LPL4  
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-397

Enclosure:  
Public Notice

cc: Listserv

**ENCLOSURE**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

PUBLIC NOTICE

NRC STAFF PROPOSES TO AMEND OPERATING LICENSE AT THE  
COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has received an application dated April 15, 2020, (available at Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML20107G972) from Energy Northwest (the licensee) for an exigent amendment to the operating license for the Columbia Generating Station, located in Richland, Washington.

The license amendment would revise Technical Specifications (TS) 3.8.4, “DC (Direct Current) Sources – Operating” and TS 3.8.7, “Distribution Systems – Operating”, TS completion times (Columbia’s TS are available at ADAMS Accession No. ML0531A30319). Specifically, a one-time 16-hour completion time change would be made to TS items 3.8.4.G.1, 3.8.7.A.1 and 3.8.7.B.1 which are associated with the Division 2, 4160 Volt Alternating Current (AC) and the 125 Volt Direct Current (DC) electrical power distribution systems. This time extension, effective with this amendment until June 30, 2021, would support a potential emergent repair of a degraded cooling system, starter coil or bucket, which supports the Division 2 electrical distribution subsystems, accounts for the complexity of the repair, time for the component’s restoration back to operability and would prevent the need to perform a unit shutdown with 12 hours. Additionally, the change also proposes removal of an existing one-time note to 3.8.7.A, which has expired.

The licensee requested that the proposed amendment be processed on an exigent basis, in accordance with the provisions in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 50.91(a)(6). Under 10 CFR 50.91(a)(6)(i)(B), where the Commission finds that exigent circumstances exist, in that a licensee and the Commission must act quickly and that time does not permit the Commission to publish a Federal Register notice allowing 30 days for prior public

comment, and it also determines that the amendment involves no significant hazards considerations, the Commission will use local media to provide reasonable notice to the public in the area surrounding a licensee's facility of the licensee's amendment and of its proposed determination that no significant hazards consideration is involved, consulting with the licensee on the proposed media release and on the geographical area of its coverage.

The licensee's claim of exigent circumstances is based on the considerations that a state of emergency was declared by the State of Washington on February 29, 2020 and that a national emergency was declared on March 13, 2020 by the Federal Government due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The licensee's claim of exigency is also based on maintaining the plant online while addressing the emergent repairs description above to support the stability and reliability of the electrical power grid in the State of Washington and the Northwestern United States while in a pandemic condition which maintains critical infrastructure during the COVID-19 pandemic. Assuring the plant's stability also directly supports a "Stay Home – Stay Healthy" proclamation that was made by the State of Washington on March 23, 2020 where nuclear power facilities are recognized as part of the critical Energy Sector profile and with continuity of operations also protects the health and well-being of all Washingtonians.

The licensee and the NRC staff have evaluated this proposed change with regard to the determination of whether or not a significant hazards consideration is involved. Operation of Columbia, in accordance with the proposed amendments will not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The proposed amendment does not increase the probability of an accident because neither the onsite Class 1E alternating current (AC) nor direct current (DC) electrical power distribution subsystem can initiate an accident. The onsite Class 1E AC and DC electrical power distribution subsystems ensure the availability of electrical power for the systems

required to shut down the reactor and maintain it in a safe condition after an anticipated operational occurrence or a postulated design basis accident.

The proposed one-time extension to allow a total 16-hour completion time (CT) does not alter the conditions, operating configurations, or minimum amount of operating equipment assumed in the safety analysis for accident mitigation. No changes are proposed in the manner in which the electrical power distribution provides plant protection or which create new modes of plant operation. In addition, a probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) evaluation concluded that the risk contribution of the increased CT is a very small increase in risk. The proposed change in CT will not affect the probability of any event initiators. There will be no degradation in the performance of, or an increase in the number of challenges imposed on, safety related equipment assumed to function during an accident situation. There will be no change to normal plant operating parameters or accident mitigation performance.

Therefore, there is no significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

The proposed amendment will not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident because inoperability of Division 2 AC and DC electrical power distribution subsystem are not accident precursors. There are no hardware changes nor are there any changes in the method by which any plant system performs a safety function. This request does not affect the normal method of plant operation. The proposed amendment does not introduce new equipment, or new way of operation of the system, which could create a new or different kind of accident. No new external threats, release pathways, or equipment failure modes are created. No new accident scenarios, transient precursors, failure mechanisms, or limiting single failures are introduced as a result of this request.

Therefore, the implementation of the proposed amendment will not create a possibility for an accident of a new or different type than those previously evaluated.

Columbia's AC and DC electrical power distribution subsystems are designed with sufficient redundancy such that any one division may be removed from service for maintenance or testing and the remaining subsystems are capable of providing electrical loads to satisfy the final safety analysis report requirements for accident mitigation or plant shutdown. A PRA evaluation concluded that the risk contribution of the CT extension is within allowable limits. There will be no change to the manner in which safety limits or limiting safety system settings are determined nor will there be any change to those plant systems necessary to assure the accomplishment of protection functions. For these reasons, the proposed amendment does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

Therefore, the proposed amendment does not involve a significant reduction in the margin of safety.

Following an initial review of this application, the requested amendments have been evaluated against the standards in 10 CFR 50.92 and the NRC staff has made a proposed (preliminary) determination that the requested amendments involve no significant hazards considerations. The changes do not significantly increase the probability or consequences of any accident previously considered, nor create the possibility of an accident of a different kind, nor significantly decrease any margin of safety.

If the proposed determination that the requested license amendment involves no significant hazards consideration becomes final, the staff will issue the amendments 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 (1) telephoned to Jennifer Dixon-Herrity, Chief, Plant Licensing Branch LPL4, by collect call to 301-415-2967, or (2) e-mailed to [Jennifer.Dixon-Herrity@nrc.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Dixon-Herrity@nrc.gov), or (3) submitted in writing to Office of Administration, Mail Stop: TWFN-7-A60M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Program Management, Announcements and Editing Staff. All comments received by close of business on May 8, 2020 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Federal workdays will be considered in reaching a final determination. A copy of the application may be examined electronically through the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) in the NRC Library at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> and, dependent upon COVID-19 access restrictions, at the Commission's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, Public File Area O1 F21, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS should contact the NRC PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209, or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to [pdr.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:pdr.resource@nrc.gov).

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**ADAMS Accession Nos.** Letter ML20114E194 Public Notice ML20118C190

OFFICE	NRR/DORL/LPL4/PM	NRR/DORL/LPL4/LA	OGC
NAME	JKlos	PBlechman (letter only)	STurk
DATE	04/27/2020	04/27/2020	05/11/2020
OFFICE	NRR/DORL/LPL4/BC	NRR/DORL/LPL4/PM	
NAME	JDixon-Herrity	JKlos	
DATE	05/12/2020	05/13/2020	

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