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NRC Approves Changes to Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station Emergency Planning Requirements

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has granted a request to alter the emergency preparedness plan for the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station in Londonderry Township, Pa., to reflect the plant's decommissioning status. Exelon Generation Co. LLC requested the change.

The change comes in the form of exemptions from NRC requirements no longer appropriate for a plant that has permanently ceased operations. These exemptions are consistent with NRC actions for other decommissioning plants. Once Exelon implements the exemptions, state and local governments may rely on their comprehensive emergency management ("all hazard") planning for off-site emergency response should events occur at TMI, rather than having a dedicated offsite radiological emergency response plan. As a result, there will not be a 10-mile emergency planning zone as currently identified in TMI's license. The plant will maintain an onsite emergency plan and response capabilities, including the continued notification of state government officials in the event of an emergency declaration.

The exemption request included analyses to show the exemptions are warranted. When compared to an operating power reactor, the risk of an offsite radiological release is significantly lower, and the types of possible accidents are significantly fewer, at a nuclear power reactor that has permanently ceased operations and removed fuel from the reactor vessel. The NRC staff [evaluated](#) and [confirmed](#) these analyses, along with considering comments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Based on the [NRC staff's evaluation and recommendation](#), the Commission today approved the [exemptions](#). The exemptions, a safety evaluation and associated license amendments reflecting the change will be issued in the next few weeks. Under the exemptions, Exelon may not implement the change to its emergency preparedness plans until Jan. 20, 2021.

Exelon holds the operating license for TMI Unit 1, a single pressurized-water reactor that began operations in 1974. TMI Unit 1 ceased operations Sept. 20, 2019. All spent fuel has been permanently moved from the reactor vessel to the spent fuel pool for storage. The exemptions from certain emergency preparedness requirements are part of several changes to the plant's licensing basis and technical specifications the licensee requested to reflect TMI's decommissioning status. TMI Unit 2 has been in a non-operating status since the accident in 1979. General Public Utilities Nuclear Inc. retains the license for TMI-2 and is owned by FirstEnergy Corp. The TMI-2 defueling was completed in April 1990, and all spent fuel has been removed from the site. The U.S. Department of Energy took title and possession of the TMI-2 spent fuel and stores it at Idaho National Laboratory.