the original records or in a record storage facility subject to certain provisions designed to protect the records from fire and other adverse conditions. The applicant seeks to streamline and standardize recordkeeping procedures and processes for the Surry Power Station and ISFSI spent fuel records. The applicant states that requiring a separate method of record storage for ISFSI records diverts resources unnecessarily.

ANSI N45.2.9–1974 provides requirements for the protection of nuclear power plant QA records against degradation. It specifies design requirements for use in the construction of record storage facilities when use of a single storage facility is desired. It includes specific requirements for protection against degradation mechanisms such as fire, humidity, and condensation. The requirements in ANSI N45.2.9–1974 have been endorsed by the NRC in Regulatory Guide 1.88, ''Collection, Storage and Maintenance of Nuclear Power Plant Quality Assurance Records,'' as adequate for satisfying the recordkeeping requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix B. ANSI N45.2.9–1974 also satisfies the requirements of 10 CFR 72.72 by providing for adequate maintenance of records regarding the identity and history of the spent fuel in storage. Such records would be subject to and need to be protected from the same types of degradation mechanisms as nuclear power plant QA records.

III

By letter dated September 10, 1998, Virginia Power requested an exemption from the requirement in 10 CFR 72.72(d) which states in part that ''Records of spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste in storage must be kept in duplicate. The duplicate set of records must be kept at a separate location sufficiently remote from the original records that a single event would not destroy both sets of records.'' The applicant proposes to maintain a single set of spent fuel records in storage at a record storage facility that satisfies the requirements set forth in ANSI N45.2.9–1974.

IV

The staff considered the applicant's request and determined that granting the proposed exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 72.72(d) is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property or the common defense and security, and is otherwise in the public interest. The staff grants the exemption, subject to the following conditions:

(1) Virginia Power may maintain records of spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste in storage either in duplicate as required by 10 CFR 72.72(d), or alternatively, a single set of records may be maintained at a record storage facility that satisfies the standards set forth in ANSI N45.2.9–1974.

(2) All other requirements of 10 CFR 72.72(d) shall be met.

The documents related to this proposed action are available for public inspection and for copying (for a fee) at the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555 and at the Local Public Document Room at the College of William and Mary, Swem Library, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, NRC has determined that granting this exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (64 FR 14277).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, MD, this 22nd day of April 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

E. William Brach,

Director, Spent Fuel Project Office, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 99–11023 Filed 4–30–99; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–275 and 50–323]

Pacific Gas and Electric Company; Diablo Canyon Power Plant, Units 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering the issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations for Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–80 and DPR–82 that were issued to Pacific Gas and Electric Company (the licensee) for operation of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant (DCPP) Units 1 and 2, located in San Luis Obispo County, California.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.60 and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, to allow use of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Code Case N–514 as an alternate method for establishing the setpoints for the low temperature overpressure protection (LTOP) systems that have been installed for overpressure protection of the DCPP reactor coolant pressure boundary.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated September 3, 1998, as supplemented by letters dated January 22, February 5, and March 17, 1999.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The provisions of 10 CFR 50.60 and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, restrict the operating conditions for the DCPP reactor coolant systems from exceeding the pressure/temperature (P/T) limits established in compliance with Appendix G to Section XI of the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code. The requirements in 10 CFR Part 50 were established to protect the integrity of the reactor coolant pressure boundary in nuclear power plants. As part of these requirements, 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, requires that the P/T limits be established for reactor pressure vessels during normal and hydrostatic or leak rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, states that ''The appropriate requirements on . . . the pressure-temperature limits and minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions.'' Pressurized water reactor licensees have installed cold overpressure mitigation systems(COMS)/low temperature overpressure protection systems (LTOP) in order to protect the reactor coolant pressure boundaries from being operated outside of the boundaries established by the P/T limit curves and to provide pressure relief of the reactor coolant pressure boundaries during low temperature overpressurization events. DCPP technical specifications require them to update and submit the changes to its LTOP setpoints whenever PG&E is requesting approval for amendments to the P/T limit curves. The use of Code Case N–514 would provide an acceptable level of safety against overpressurization events of the DCPP reactor pressure vessels. Based on the conservatism that is incorporated into the methods of Appendix G of the Section XI to the ASME Code for calculating P/T limit curves, it is concluded that permitting the LTOP setpoints to be established in accordance with the Code Case (e.g., at a level ≤110 percent of the limit defined by the P/T limit curves) would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle fracture failure of the reactor pressure vessels. Therefore, the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G and Appendix G to Section XI of the ASME Code, are not necessary

to prevent brittle fracture of the reactor pressure vessel from occurring during low temperature operation.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the use of Code Case N–514 as an alternative method for establishing the setpoints for the LTOP systems at DCPP Units 1 and 2 would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle fracture of the DCPP reactor vessels.

The proposed action will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the ''no-action'' alternative). Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for Diablo Canyon Power Plant dated May 1973, and the Addendum dated May 1976.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on April 22, 1999, the staff consulted with the California State official, Mr. Steve Hsu of the Radiologic Health Branch of the State Department of Health Services, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed amendments. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed amendments will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's application dated September 3, 1998, as supplemented dated January 22, February 5, and March 17, 1999, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the California Polytechnic State University, Robert E. Kennedy Library, Government Documents and Maps Department, San Luis Obispo, California 93407.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 28th day of April 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Steven D. Bloom,

Project Manager, Section 2, Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99–11117 Filed 4–30–99; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–498 and 50–499]

STP Nuclear Operating Co., South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from Facility Operating License No. NPF–76 and Facility Operating License No. NPF–80, issued to STP Nuclear Operating Company (the licensee), for operation of the South Texas Project (STP), Units 1 and 2, located in Matagorda County, Texas.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt STP Nuclear Operating Company from the requirements of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) § 50.60, which requires all power reactors to meet the fracture toughness and material surveillance program requirements for the reactor coolant pressure boundary set forth in appendices G and H to 10 CFR part 50. The proposed exemption would allow STP Nuclear Operating Company to apply American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Code Case N–514 for determining STP's cold overpressurization mitigation system (COMS) pressure setpoint.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated March 18, 1999.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed exemption is needed to support an amendment to the STP Technical Specifications which will revise the heatup, cooldown, and COMS curves. The use of ASME Code Case N–514 would allow an increased operating band for system makeup and pressure control.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed action will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the ''no-action'' alternative). Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the ''Final Environmental Statement Related to the Operation of South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2,'' dated August 1996, in NUREG–1171.