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

Alternative to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded that there is no significant environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the exemption would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed exemption and this alternative 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 Turkey Point Plant dated July 1972.

Agencies and Persons Contacted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 28, 1998, the staff consulted with the Florida State official, Mr. William A. Passetti, Chief, Office of Radiation Control, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action 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 exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the licensee's request for the exemption dated March 5, 1998, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Library, Florida International University, University Park Campus, Miami, Florida 33199.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 25th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Frederick J. Hebdon,

Director, Project Directorate II–3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–17605 Filed 7–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–1–M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket 72–16]

Virginia Electric and Power Company, Issuance of Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact Regarding the Proposed Exemptions From Requirements of 10 CFR Part 72

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Virginia Electric and Power Company (Virginia Power). The requested exemption would allow Virginia Power to submit the report of preoperational test acceptance criteria and test results at least 3 days (instead of 30 days) prior to the receipt of fuel at its independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) at the North Anna Power Station (Docket Nos. 50–338 and 50–339) in Louisa County, Virginia.

Environmental Assessment (EA)

Identification of Proposed Action

By letter dated June 12, 1998, Virginia Power requested an exemption from the requirement in 10 CFR 72.82(e) which states that ''A report of the preoperational test acceptance criteria and test results must be submitted . . . at least 30 days prior to the receipt of spent fuel or high level waste.'' Virginia Power proposed to submit this report 3 days prior to receipt of fuel at the ISFSI. Granting the exemption at this time would enable Virginia Power to proceed with activities to support its scheduled Unit 1 refueling outage.

Need for the Proposed Action:

Virginia Power's request is to ensure the availability of adequate storage space in the spent fuel pool to support its upcoming Unit 1 refueling outage which is scheduled to begin in September 1998. New fuel for the outage is scheduled to arrive onsite on July 21, 1998. To load the new fuel into the spent fuel pool and still retain a single unit full core offload capacity in the spent fuel pool, Virginia Power plans to load its first spent fuel storage cask during the week of July 6, 1998.

The purpose of the 30-day period, for the applicant to submit a report of the preoperational test acceptance criteria and test results, is to establish a sufficient hold point to ensure that the NRC has enough time to inspect a new licensee's preparation and, if necessary, exercise its regulatory authority before fuel is received at an ISFSI. For example, an ISFSI located at an away-from-reactor site may not have a resident inspector, therefore, the full 30-day period might be necessary to provide enough time for the NRC to review the licensee's records and preoperational test results and, if needed, send inspectors to the site. The North Anna ISFSI is located on a reactor site that has resident inspectors, and the resident and other NRC inspectors were present to observe portions of the preoperational test activities as they were being conducted. The NRC inspectors will also have ongoing access to the applicant's tests procedures and results to allow the inspectors to conduct the appropriate review. Thus, in view of the NRC's oversight presence during the preoperational testing phase at North Anna, as well as NRC's immediate access to the applicant's test procedures and results, the Commission concludes that the entire 30 days provided for in the rule will not be needed for the NRC to complete its inspection activities and determine whether any further regulatory action is needed before spent fuel is received at the North Anna ISFSI. However, the NRC may determine that it requires more than the requested 3 days to review the test results. The NRC will consider the specific amount of time needed to review the North Anna preoperational test results in its final response to the request for exemption.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the license application for the North Anna ISFSI (62 FR 16202, April 4, 1997) considered the potential environmental impacts of construction and operation of an ISFSI at the North Anna site. In the EA, the NRC concluded that storage of spent fuel at the North Anna ISFSI will not significantly affect the quality of the environment. The proposed actions now under consideration would not change the potential environmental effects assessed in the EA. Specifically, there are no environmental impacts associated with the time frame for submitting the preoperational test acceptance criteria and test results. As previously discussed, the 30-day period is to provide the NRC sufficient opportunity to review the licensee's report. However, as NRC inspectors were on site during the applicant's preoperational tests, which were conducted between June 8 and June 18, 1998, the shorter 3-day period will provide the same, sufficient opportunity. In addition, the proposed exemption does not involve any changes that increase the probability or consequences of accidents, change the

types of effluents that may be released offsite, or would significantly increase the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that this proposed exemption will have no significant radiological or nonradiological environmental impacts.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

Since there is no significant environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact are not evaluated. The alternative to the proposed action would be to deny approval of the exemption and, therefore, require the preoperational test acceptance criteria and test report to be submitted 30 days prior to receipt of spent fuel, rather than 3 days as proposed. This alternative would have no significant environmental impacts as well. However, denial of the requested exemption could result in loss of full core offload capability. The licensee is not required to maintain a full core offload capability, however, it is an operationally advantageous capability.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

An official from the State of Virginia Bureau of Radiological Health was contacted about this EA for the proposed action and had no concerns.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The environmental impacts of the proposed action have been reviewed in accordance with the requirements set forth in 10 CFR part 51. Based upon the foregoing EA, the Commission finds that the proposed action of granting an exemption from 10 CFR 72.82(e) so that Virginia Power may submit a preoperational test acceptance criteria and test report 3 days prior to receipt of spent fuel at the North Anna ISFSI will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

This application was docketed under 10 CFR part 72, Docket 72–16. For further details with respect to this action, see the application for an ISFSI license dated May 9, 1995, and the request for exemption dated June 12, 1998, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20555, and the Local Public Document Room at the University of Virginia, Alderman Library, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William F. Kane,

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

[FR Doc. 98–17608 Filed 7–1–98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Academic, Research & Development, and Other Licenses of Limited Scope, Availability of Draft NUREG

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is announcing the availability of and requesting comment on draft NUREG–1556, Volume 7, ''Consolidated Guidance about Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance about Academic, Research & Development, and Other Licenses of Limited Scope,'' dated May 1998.

NRC is using Business Process Redesign (BPR) techniques to redesign its materials licensing process, as described in NUREG–1539, ''Methodology and Findings of the NRC's Materials Licensing Process Redesign.'' A critical element of the new process is consolidating and updating numerous guidance documents into a NUREG-series of reports. This draft NUREG report is the seventh program-specific guidance developed to support an improved materials licensing process.

The guidance is intended for use by applicants, licensees, NRC license reviewers, and other NRC personnel. The draft NUREG combines and updates the guidance for applicants and licensees previously found in (1) Regulatory Guide 10.2, Revision 1, ''Guidance To Academic Institutions Applying For Specific Byproduct Material Licenses of Limited Scope,'' dated December 1976, (2) Regulatory Guide 10.7, ''Guide For The Preparation Of Applications For Licenses For Laboratory and Industrial Use of Small Quantities of Byproduct Material,'' dated August 1979, and (3) Draft Regulatory Guide FC 405–4, ''Guide for the Preparation of Applications for Licenses for the Use of Sealed Sources in Gas Chromatography Devices and X-Ray Fluorescence Analyzers,'' dated February 1985. In addition, this draft report also contains pertinent information found in Technical Assistance Requests and Information Notices. This draft report is for public comment only, and is NOT for use in preparing or reviewing applications until it is published in final form. It is being distributed for comment to encourage public participation in its development.

DATES: The comment period ends September 30, 1998. Comments received after that time will be considered if practicable.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to: Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001. Hand deliver comments to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Federal workdays. Comments may also be submitted through the Internet by addressing electronic mail to DLM1@NRC.GOV.

Those considering public comment may request a free single copy of draft NUREG–1556, Volume 7, by writing to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Mrs. Sally L. Merchant, Mail Stop TWFN 9–F–31, Washington, DC 20555–0001. Alternatively, submit requests through the Internet by addressing electronic mail to slm2@nrc.gov. A copy of draft NUREG–1556, Volume 7, is also available for inspection and/or copying for a fee in the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW. (Lower Level), Washington, DC 20555–0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mrs. Sally L. Merchant, Mail Stop TWFN 9–F–31, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, telephone (301) 415–7874; electronic mail address: slm2@nrc.gov.

Electronic Access

Draft NUREG–1556, Vol. 7 will be available electronically by visiting NRC's Home Page (http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/nucmat.html) approximately two weeks after the publication date of this notice.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of June, 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Frederick C. Combs,

Acting Director, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 98–17607 Filed 7–1–98; 8:45 am]

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