assessments and make tests results more meaningful to parents. The teleconference (which will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.) is an effort to bring education policy makers together with governors, their education aides, state legislators, presidents of state boards of education and representatives of the business community to talk about education reform initiatives.

Dated: November 20, 1998.

Ken Nelson,

Executive Director, National Education Goals Panel.

[FR Doc. 98–31581 Filed 11–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4010–01–M

NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT CORPORATION

Sunshine Act Meeting; Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Directors

TIME AND DATE: 2:00 p.m., Monday, December 7, 1998.

PLACE: Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, 1325 G Street, NW., Suite 800, Board Room, Washington, DC 20005.

STATUS: Open/Closed.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Jeffrey T. Bryson, General Counsel/Secretary, 202/376–2441.

AGENDA:

I. Call to Order
II. Approval of Minutes:
  September 9, 1998, Regular Meeting
III. Audit Committee Report:
  September 8, 1998
IV. Treasurer's Report
V. Executive Director's Quarterly Management Report
VI. Personnel Committee Report:
  November 9, 1998, Closed Meeting
VII. Adjourn

Jeffrey T. Bryson,

General Counsel/Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–31799 Filed 11–24–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7570–01–M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–213]

In the Matter of Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company (Haddam Neck Plant); Exemption

I

Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company is the holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR–61, which authorizes the licensee to possess the Haddam Neck Plant (HNP). The license states, among other things, that the facility is subject to all the rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission or NRC) now or hereafter in effect. The facility consists of a pressurized-water reactor located at the licensee's site in Middlesex County, Connecticut. The facility is permanently shut down and defueled, and the licensee is no longer authorized to operate or place fuel in the reactor.

II

Section 50.54(w) of 10 CFR Part 50 requires power reactor licensees to maintain onsite property damage insurance coverage in the amount of $1.06 billion. Section 140.11(a)(4) of 10 CFR Part 140 requires a reactor with a rated capacity of 100,000 electrical kilowatts or more to maintain liability insurance of $200 million and to participate in a secondary insurance pool.

NRC may grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50 of the regulations which, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), (1) are authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security and (2) present special circumstances. Special circumstances exist when application of the regulation in the particular circumstances would not serve the underlying purpose of the rule or is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule (10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii)). The underlying purpose of Section 50.54(w) is to provide sufficient property damage insurance coverage to ensure funding for onsite post-accident recovery stabilization and decontamination costs in the unlikely event of an accident at a nuclear power plant.

NRC may grant exemptions from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 140 of the regulations which, pursuant to 10 CFR 140.8, are authorized by law and are otherwise in the public interest. The underlying purpose of Section 140.11 is to provide sufficient liability insurance to ensure funding for claims resulting from a nuclear incident or precautionary evacuation.

III

On October 7, 1997, the licensee requested exemption from the financial protection requirement limits of 10 CFR 50.54(w) and 10 CFR 140.11. The licensee requested that the amount of insurance coverage it must maintain be reduced to $50 million for onsite property damage and $100 million for offsite financial protection. The licensee stated that special circumstances exist because of the permanently shutdown and defueled condition of HNP.

The financial protection limits of 10 CFR 50.54(w) and 10 CFR 140.11 were established to require a licensee to maintain sufficient insurance to cover the costs of a nuclear accident at an operating reactor. Those costs were derived from the consequences of a release of radioactive material from the reactor. Although the risk of an accident at an operating reactor is very low, the consequences can be large. In an operating plant, the high temperature and pressure of the reactor coolant system, as well as the inventory of relatively short-lived radionuclides, contribute to both the risk and consequences of an accident. In a permanently shutdown and defueled reactor facility, the reactor coolant system will never be operated and contains no short-lived radionuclides, which eliminates the possibility of reactor accidents. A further reduction in risk occurs because decay heat from the spent fuel decreases over time, which reduces the amount of cooling required to prevent the spent fuel from heatingup to a temperature that could compromise the ability of the fuel cladding to retain fission products.

Along with the reduction in risk, the consequences of a release decline after a reactor permanently shuts down and defuels. The short-lived radionuclides contained in the spent fuel, particularly volatile components such as iodine and most of the noble gases, decay away, thereby reducing the inventory of radioactive materials that are readily dispersible and transportable in air.

Although the risk and consequences of a radiological release decline substantially after a plant permanently defuels its reactor, they are not completely eliminated. There are potential onsite and offsite radiological consequences that could be associated with the onsite storage of the spent fuel in the spent fuel pool (SFP). In addition, a site may contain a radioactive inventory of liquid radwaste, activated reactor components, and contaminated structural materials. For purposes of modifying the amount of insurance coverage maintained by a power reactor licensee, the potential consequences, despite very low risk, are an appropriate consideration.

In order to determine the insurance coverage sufficient for a permanently defueled facility, the cost of recovery from potential accident scenarios must be evaluated. At the HNP, spent fuel is the largest source term on the site. The spent fuel is stored in the SFP, which uses water to cool the fuel. By letter dated September 26, 1997, the licensee

submitted an analysis of the heatup characteristics of the spent fuel in the absence of SFP water inventory. The analysis was based on storing the fuel in a configuration consistent with the analysis. By letter dated December 18, 1997, the licensee stated that, as of October 23, 1997, the spent fuel assemblies had been rearranged within the SFP to comply with the configuration used for the heat-up analysis. The licensee concluded that air cooling of the fuel would be sufficient to maintain the integrity of the fuel cladding and that rapid zircaloy oxidation is no longer possible. The staff independently evaluated the licensee's conclusion and found it acceptable. The staff concluded that the cost of recovering from a loss of SFP water would be bounded by other accidents that may occur at a permanently defueled site.

In SECY 96–256, ''Changes to the Financial Protection Requirements for Permanently Shutdown Nuclear Power Reactors, 10 CFR 50.54(w) and 10 CFR 140.11,'' dated December 17, 1996, the staff estimated the onsite cleanup costs of accidents considered to be the most costly at a permanently defueled site with spent fuel stored in the SFP. The staff found that the onsite recovery costs for a fuel handling accident could range up to $24 million. The estimated onsite cleanup costs to recover from the rupture of a large liquid radwaste storage tank could range up to $50 million. The licensee's proposed level of $50 million for onsite property insurance is sufficient to cover these estimated cleanup costs.

The offsite cleanup costs of the accident scenarios discussed above are estimated to be negligible in SECY 96–256. However, a licensee's liability for offsite costs may be significant due to lawsuits alleging damages from offsite releases. Experience at Three Mile Island Unit 2 showed that significant judgments against a licensee can result despite negligible dose consequences from an offsite release. An appropriate level of financial liability coverage is needed to account for potential judgments and settlements and to protect the Federal Government from indemnity claims. The licensee's proposed level of $100 million in primary offsite liability coverage is sufficient for this purpose.

The staff has determined that participation in the secondary insurance pool for offsite financial protection is not required for a permanently shut down and defueled plant after the time that air cooling of the spent fuel is sufficient to maintain the integrity of the fuel cladding. As noted above, the staff finds that sufficient time has elapsed to ensure the integrity of the HNP spent fuel cladding.

IV

The NRC staff has completed its review of the licensee's request to reduce financial protection limits to $50 million for onsite property insurance and $100 million for offsite liability insurance. On the basis of its review, the NRC staff finds that the spent fuel stored in HNP's SFP is no longer susceptible to rapid Zircaloy oxidation. The requested reductions are consistent with SECY–96–256, ''Changes to the Financial Protection Requirements for Permanently Shutdown Nuclear Power Reactors, 10 CFR 50.54(w) and 10 CFR 140.11,'' dated December 17, 1996. The Commission informed the staff by a staff requirements memo dated January 28, 1997, that it did not object to the insurance reductions recommended in SECY 96–256. The licensee's proposed financial protection limits will provide sufficient insurance to recover from limiting hypothetical events, if they occur. Thus, the underlying purposes of the regulations will not be adversely affected by the reductions in insurance coverage.

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), an exemption to reduce onsite property insurance to $50 million is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security. Further, special circumstances are present, as set forth in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii). Therefore the Commission hereby grants an exemption from the requirement of 10 CFR 50.54(w).

In addition, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 140.8, an exemption to reduce primary offsite liability insurance to $100 million, accompanied by withdrawal from the secondary insurance pool for offsite liability insurance, is authorized by law and is in the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 140.11(a)(4).

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of these exemptions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (63 FR 50929).

These exemptions are effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 19th day of November 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Roy P. Zimmerman,

Acting Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–31643 Filed 11–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–445 and 50–446]

Texas Utilities Electric Company, Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2; Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License, Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination, and Opportunity for a Hearing

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF–87 and NPF–89 issued to Texas Utilities Electric Company (the licensee) for operation of Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 located in Somervell County, Texas.

The proposed amendment would increase the allowed outage time (AOT) for a centrifugal charging pump from 72 hours to 7 days and add a Configuration Risk Management Program.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendment, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendment would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

1. Do the proposed changes involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated?

There is no effect on the probability of an event; the only potential effect is on the capability to mitigate the event. The centrifugal charging pumps are credited in the Final Safety Analysis Report Chapter 15