

although Code Case N-640 was incorporated into the ASME Code recently, an exemption is still needed because the P-T limits required by 10 CFR 50.60 are based on the 1989 edition of the ASME Code.

The new P-T limits calculated by the methodologies that are subject to the exemptions are incorporated into the PNPP Technical Specifications by an associated proposed license amendment submitted by the licensee. The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption and amendment dated June 4, 2002.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The revised P-T limits are desired to allow required reactor vessel hydrostatic and leak tests to be performed at a significantly lower temperature. These tests are to be performed during the upcoming refueling outage scheduled to commence in April 2003. The lower temperature for the tests can reduce refueling outage critical path time by reducing or eliminating the heatup time to achieve required test conditions.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has evaluated the proposed action and concludes that the exemption and associated license amendment described above would provide an adequate margin of safety against brittle failure of the PNPP reactor vessel. Since the proposed changes do not adversely affect the integrity of the reactor vessel, the function of the vessel to act as a radiological barrier during an accident is not affected.

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

With regard to potential non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect 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 NRC concludes that there is not significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Environmental Impacts of the 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

The action does not involve the use of any different resources that those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the PNPP, dated April 1974.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

On March 11, 2003, the staff consulted with the Illinois State Official, Frank Niziolek of the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The Staff official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC 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 letter dated June 4, 2002. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm-adams.html>. 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@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 13th day of March, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Anthony J. Mendiola,

Chief, Section 2, Project Directorate III-2, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 03-6543 Filed 3-18-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-316]

Indiana Michigan Power Company, Donald C. Cook Nuclear Plant, Unit 2; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of an exemption from Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 50, Appendix G for Facility Operating License No. DPR-74, issued to Indiana Michigan Power Company (the licensee), for operation of the Donald C. Cook (D. C. Cook) Nuclear Plant, Unit 2, located in Berrien County, Michigan. Therefore, as required by 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Section 50.60(a) and Appendix G, which would allow the use of American Society of Mechanical Engineers *Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code* (ASME Code) Code Case N-641 as the basis for revised reactor vessel pressure and temperature (P-T) curves, and low temperature overpressure protection system setpoints in the D. C. Cook Unit 2 Technical Specifications (TSs).

The regulation at 10 CFR part 50, section 50.60(a), requires, in part, that except where an exemption is granted by the Commission, all light-water nuclear power reactors must meet the fracture toughness requirements for the reactor coolant pressure boundary set forth in Appendix G to 10 CFR part 50. Appendix G to 10 CFR part 50 requires that P-T limits be established for reactor pressure vessels (RPVs) during normal operating and hydrostatic or leak-rate testing conditions. Specifically, 10 CFR part 50, Appendix G, states, "The appropriate requirements on both the P-T limits and the minimum permissible temperature must be met for all conditions." Appendix G of 10 CFR part 50 specifies that the requirements for these limits are the ASME Code, section XI, Appendix G, limits.

ASME Code Case N-641 permits the use of alternate reference fracture toughness (*i.e.*, use of " K_{IC} fracture toughness curve" instead of " K_{IA} fracture toughness curve," where K_{IC} and K_{IA} are "Reference Stress Intensity Factors," as defined in ASME Code, section XI, Appendices A and G,