changes, see the application for amendments.

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

By July 9, 1998, the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendment to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's ''Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings'' in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 FR 2.714 which is available 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 Athens Public Library, 405 E. South Street, Athens, Alabama. If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) The nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than 15 days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide reference to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendment under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, by the above date. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001, and to General Counsel, Tennessee Valley Authority, 400 West Summit Drive, ET 10H, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(i)–(v) and 2.714(d).

If a request for a hearing is received, the Commission's staff may issue the amendment after it completes its technical review and prior to the completion of any required hearing if it publishes a further notice for public comment of its proposed finding of no significant hazards consideration in accordance with 10 CFR 50.91 and 50.92. For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendments dated October 1, 1997, as supplemented October 14, 1997, March 16, April 1 and 28, May 1, and 20, 1998, 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 Athens Public Library, 405 E. South Street, Athens, Alabama.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 3rd day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

L. Raghavan,

Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate II–3, Division of Reactor Projects-I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–244]

Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation and R.E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering revoking an exemption issued to Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (the licensee), holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR–18 for operation of the R.E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant located in Wayne County, New York.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed action would revoke one of the exemptions from the requirements of Section III.G of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 issued on March 21, 1985. By letter dated January 13, 1998, the licensee informed the NRC that the exemption from Section III.G of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 for the

R.E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant issued in connection with the absence of a continuous fire-rated barrier at the common boundary between Fire Areas ABBM and ABI at the Refueling Water Storage Tank (RWST) is no longer required. The licensee indicated that the barrier has now been sealed by insertion of a 12-inch minimum depth of kaowool into a 6-inch gap around the circumference of the tank and closure of the gap by a ¾-inch thick steel plate. Therefore, a continuous fire-rated barrier is not absent at this location.

The proposed action is in response to the licensee's letter dated January 13, 1998.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action is needed because there no longer is a basis or underlying need for the exemption since the barrier at the common boundary between Fire Areas ABBM and ABI at the RWST has been sealed.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there is no significant environmental impact if the subject exemption is revoked.

The proposed revocation is an administrative action that reflects that there no longer is a need or basis for the exemption in light of the licensee's corrective action. Therefore, the proposed action would not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives 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 not revoking the exemption. Not revoking the exemption 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 the R.E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant dated December 1973.''

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 4, 1998, the staff consulted with the Ms. Hide Volt of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the 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 action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated January 13,1998, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, which is located at The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, D. C., and at the local public document room located at the Rochester Public Library, 115 South Avenue, Rochester, New York.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 2nd day of June 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

S. Singh Bajwa,

Director, Project Directorate I–1, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Public Meeting on NRC Regulatory Oversight of DOE Facilities

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will hold a public meeting on Thursday, June 25, 1998, in Aiken, South Carolina, to address issues related to pilot program for NRC's external regulation of certain DOE facilities. The Receiving Basin for Offsite Fuels (RBOF) at DOE's Savannah River Site (SRS) has been selected at the third pilot project within the program.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a joint public meeting to provide information on this pilot project on Thursday, June 25, 1998, at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Aiken Conference Center, City Municipal Building, 215 The Alley, Aiken, South Carolina.

In June 1997, DOE and NRC agreed to pursue NRC external regulation of certain DOE facilities on a pilot program basis. A pilot program of NRC simulated regulation has been established to collect information on the desirability of NRC oversight and on whether to seek legislation to authorize such oversight. The DOE and the NRC expect to evaluate six to ten DOE facilities during the two year pilot program which began in November 1997. The RBOF at the SRS has been chosen as one of the pilot facilities.

The major areas of discussion at this meeting will be:

- The overall pilot program and background information.
- The RBOF Work Plan.
- Major issues affecting NRC oversight (generic and site-specific).

One of the main purposes of the meeting is to describe the process through which stakeholders may participate in the pilot program. Stakeholders will be invited to ask questions and submit comments relevant to the objectives of the pilot program and the process by which those objectives are proposed to be addressed at the RBOF. Issues raised by stakeholders will be addressed in the final report following the pilot evaluation at RBOF.

Since 1994, DOE has been considering whether there are advantages to be gained from external regulation of existing DOE facilities. Two advisory groups recommended that the NRC be considered as the external regulator of nuclear and radiological safety at DOE sites. External regulation by the NRC may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of DOE's radiological safety programs. DOE facilities would be regulated consistent with other facilities of the same type engaged in similar activities, and the NRC could maintain complete independence because it has no responsibility for operating the facilities.

A number of background documents pertaining to the issue of NRC oversight