rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references 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 amendments 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 J.W. Durham, Sr., Esquire Sr. V.P. and General Counsel, Philadelphia Electric Company, 2301 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19101, 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 amendments 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 6, 1997, which is 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 Pottstown Public Library, 500 High Street, Pottstown, PA 19464.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of January, 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John F. Stolz,

Director, Project Directorate I–2 Division of Reactor Projects—I/II Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–2180 Filed 1–28–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–352]

Philadelphia Electric Company; Limerick Generating Station, Unit 1 Environmental Assessment and Finding of no Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations for Facility Operating License No. NPF–39 issued to Philadelphia Electric Company (the licensee), for operation of the Limerick Generating Station (LGS), Unit 1, located in Montgomery and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt Philadelphia Electric Company from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24(a), which requires in each area in which special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored, a monitoring system that will energize clear audible alarms if accidental criticality occurs. The proposed action would also exempt the licensee from the requirements to maintain emergency procedures for each area in which this licensed special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored to ensure that all personnel withdraw to an area of safety upon the sounding of the alarm, to familiarize personnel with the evacuation plan, and to designate responsible individuals for determining the cause of the alarm, and to place radiation survey instruments in accessible locations for use in such an emergency.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for exemption dated December 23, 1997.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of 10 CFR 70.24 is to ensure that if a criticality were to occur during the handling of special nuclear material, personnel would be alerted to that fact and would take appropriate action. At a commercial nuclear power plant the inadvertent criticality with which 10 CFR 70.24 is concerned could occur during fuel handling operations. The special nuclear material that could be assembled into a critical mass at a commercial nuclear power plant is in the form of nuclear fuel; the quantity of other forms of special nuclear material that is stored on site in any given location is small enough to preclude achieving a critical mass. Because the fuel is not enriched beyond 5.0 weight percent Uranium-235 and because commercial nuclear plant licensees have procedures and design features that prevent inadvertent criticality, the staff has determined that it is unlikely that an inadvertent criticality could occur due to the handling of special nuclear material at a commercial power reactor. The requirements of 10 CFR 70.24(a), therefore, are not necessary to ensure the safety of personnel during the handling of special nuclear materials at commercial power reactors. However, an exemption to 10 CFR 70.24(a) is needed to permit deviation from these requirements.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the proposed action involves features located entirely within the protected area as defined in 10 CFR part 20.

The proposed action will not result in an increase in the probability or consequences of accidents or result in a change in occupational or offsite dose. Therefore, there are no radiological impacts associated with the proposed action.

The proposed action will not result in a change in nonradiological plant effluents and will have no other nonradiological environmental impact.

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

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable 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 exemption, the staff considered denial of the requested exemption. Denial of the request 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 Limerick Generating Station, Units 1 and 2,'' dated November 1973.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on January 23, 1998, the staff consulted with the Pennsylvania State official, Mr. David Ney of the Bureau of Radiation Protection, Department of Environmental Protection, 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 December 23, 1997, which is 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 Pottstown Public Library, 500 High Street, Pottstown, PA 19464.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 23rd day of January 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Bartholomew C. Buckley,

Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate I–2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–2179 Filed 1–28–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Proposed Generic Communication; Year 2000 Readiness of Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants (MA0138)

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is proposing to issue a generic letter to all holders of operating licenses for nuclear power plants, except those who have permanently ceased operations and have certified that fuel has been permanently removed from the reactor vessel, to require that all addressees provide certain information regarding their programs, planned or implemented, to address the Year 2000 (Y2K) problem in computer systems at their facilities. In particular, addressees are being asked to provide written confirmation of implementation of the programs, and written certification that their facilities are Y2K ready and in compliance with the terms and conditions of their licenses and NRC regulations. This information is being requested under 10 CFR 50.54(f).

The NRC is seeking comment from interested parties on both the technical and regulatory aspects of the proposed generic letter presented under the Supplementary Information heading. In this regard, the NRC encourages the industry to propose a viable alternative to the generic letter as a means of providing the necessary assurance to the NRC that licensees are effectively addressing the Y2K problem in computer systems at their facilities. Such an alternative could consist of a voluntary initiative on the part of the nuclear power industry to obtain licensee inputs and communicate its findings to the NRC.

The proposed generic letter has been endorsed by the Committee to Review Generic Requirements (CRGR). Relevant information that was sent to the CRGR will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room. The NRC will consider comments received from interested parties in the final evaluation of the proposed generic letter. The NRC's final evaluation will include a review of the technical position and, as appropriate, an analysis of the value/impact on licensees. Should this generic letter be issued by the NRC, it will become available for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room.

DATES: Comment period expires March 2, 1998. Comments submitted after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but assurance of consideration cannot be given except for comments received on or before this date.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T6–D69, Washington, DC 20555–0001. Written comments may also be delivered to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:45 am to 4:15 pm, Federal workdays. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, N.W. (Lower Level), Washington, D.C.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matthew Chiramal, (301) 415–2845.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

NRC Generic Letter No. 98–XX: Year 2000 Readiness of Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants

Addressees

All holders of operating licenses for nuclear power plants, except those who have permanently ceased operations and have certified that fuel has been permanently removed from the reactor vessel.

Purpose

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing this generic letter to require that all addressees provide the following information regarding their programs, planned or implemented, to address the Year 2000 (Y2K) problem in computer systems at their facilities: (1) written confirmation of implementation of the programs, and (2) written certification that the facilities are Y2K ready and in compliance with the terms and conditions of their licenses and NRC regulations.

Description of Circumstances

Simply stated the Y2K computer problem pertains to the potential inability of computers to correctly recognize dates beyond the current century, i.e., beginning with January 1, 2000 and beyond. The problem results from computer hardware or software that uses two-digit fields to represent the year. If the Y2K problem is not corrected, computer systems will be unable to recognize the change in century and will misread ''00,'' for the year 2000, as 1900. The Y2K problem has the potential to interfere with the proper operation of any computer system, any hardware that is microprocessor-based (embedded