shall be whether this Order should be sustained.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202(c)(2)(i), Mr. McGriff may, in addition to demanding a hearing, at the time the answer is filed or sooner, move the presiding officer to set aside the immediate effectiveness of the Order on the ground that the Order, including the need for immediate effectiveness, is not based on adequate evidence but on mere suspicion, unfounded allegations, or error.

In the absence of any request for hearing, or written approval of an extension of time in which to request a hearing, the provisions specified in Section IV above shall be final 20 days from the date of this Order without further order or proceedings. If an extension of time for requesting a hearing has been approved, the provisions specified in Section IV shall be final when the extension expires if a hearing request has not been received. An answer or a request for hearing shall not stay the immediate effectiveness of this order.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

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

Ashok C. Thadani,

Acting Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Effectiveness.

[FR Doc. 98–5711 Filed 3–4–98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–424 and 50–425]

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al.; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al. (the licensee), to partially withdraw its May 1, 1995, application for proposed amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF–68 and NPF–81 for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP), Unit Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, located at the licensee's site in Burke County, Georgia. The May 1, 1995, application was supplemented by letters dated August 3 and 9, September 22, November 20 and December 21, 1995, January 26 and 30, February 19 and 29, March 5 and 12, May 6, June 17, August 23, and September 13, 1996.

The proposed amendments would have revised the Technical Specifications (TS) related to allowed outage times for the Containment Spray and Cooling Systems, TS 3.6.6.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments published in the **Federal Register** on September 7, 1995 (60 FR 46633). However, by letter dated February 17, 1998, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated May 1, 1995, and the supplements previously stated, and the licensee's letter dated February 17, 1998, which partially withdrew the application for license amendments. The above documents 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 Burke County Library, 412 Fourth Street, Waynesboro, Georgia.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 27th day of February 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

David H. Jaffe,

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

[FR Doc. 98–5714 Filed 3–4–98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–254 and 50–265]

Commonwealth Edison Company and Midamerican Energy Company (Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2); 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 to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–29 and DPR–30, issued to Commonwealth Edison Company (the licensee), for operation of the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Rock Island County, Illinois.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24, 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, 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 licensees' application for exemption dated October 27, 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 onsite 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 features that are designed to 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. Therefore, the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24 are not necessary to ensure the safety of personnel during the handling of special nuclear materials at commercial power reactors.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that inadvertent or accidental criticality will be precluded through compliance with the Quad Cities Technical Specifications, the design of the fuel storage racks providing geometric spacing of fuel assemblies in their storage locations, and administrative controls imposed on fuel handling procedures.

The proposed exemption would not result in an increase in the probability or consequences of accidents, affect radiological plant effluents, or cause any significant occupational exposures. Therefore, there are no radiological

impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

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

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

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded that 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 Quad Cities dated September 1972.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on January 16, 1990, 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 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 licensees' letter dated October 27, 1997, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room located at the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Dixon Public Library, 221 Hennepin Avenue, Dixon, Illinois 61021.

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

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Robert A. Capra,

Director, Project Directorate III–2, Division of Reactor Projects III/IV, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–5710 Filed 3–4–98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–327 and 50–328]

Sequoyah Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2; 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 to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR–77 and DPR–79 for the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant (SQN), Units 1 and 2, respectively, issued to the Tennessee Valley Authority (the licensee).

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed action is in response to the licensee's application dated December 1, 1997, for exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) regarding submission of revisions to the updated Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR), which could also affect the schedule for submitting design change reports for facility changes made under 10 CFR 50.59 for SQN. Under the proposed exemption the licensee would schedule updates to the single, unified FSAR for the two units based on the refueling cycle of Unit 2.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The Code of Federal Regulations, 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4), requires licensees to submit updates to their FSAR annually or within 6 months after each refueling outage providing that the interval between successive updates does not exceed 24 months. Since Units 1 and 2 share a common FSAR, the licensee must update the same document annually or within 6 months after a refueling outage for either unit. The underlying purpose of the rule was to relieve licensees of the burden of filing annual FSAR revisions while assuring that such revisions are made at least every 24 months. The Commission reduced the burden, in part, by permitting a licensee to submit its FSAR revisions 6 months after refueling outages for its facility, but did not provide for multiple unit facilities sharing a common FSAR in the rule. Rather, the Commission stated that ''With respect to the concern about multiple facilities sharing a common FSAR, licensees will have maximum flexibility for scheduling updates on a case-by-case basis.'' 57 FR 39355 (1992). Allowing the exemption would maintain the UFSAR current within 24 months of the last revision and would not exceed a 24-month interval for submission of the 10 CFR 50.59 design-change report for either unit, if this is submitted with the FSAR revision.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that it involves administrative activities unrelated to plant operation.

The proposed action will not result in an increase in the probability or consequences of accidents or result in a change in occupational exposure 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.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded that 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 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 did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to SQN dated February 13, 1974.

Agencies and Persons Contacted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on January 29, 1998, the staff consulted with the Tennessee State official regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.