

10 CFR 50.60(a) to permit the use of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (ASME Code), Section XI, Code Case N-640, "Alternative Requirement Fracture Toughness for Development of P-T [Pressure and Temperature] Limit Curves for ASME Section XI Division I," in lieu of 10 CFR part 50, appendix G, paragraph I.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated May 28, 2003.

#### *The Need for the Proposed Action*

The proposed action provides relief from the restriction of the P-T operating window defined by the P-T operating and test curves developed in accordance with ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G procedure. ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G procedure was conservatively developed based on the level of knowledge existing in 1974 concerning reactor pressure vessel materials and the estimated effects of operation. Since 1974, the level of knowledge about these topics has been greatly expanded. This increased knowledge permits relaxation of the ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G, requirements via application of ASME Code Case N-640 while maintaining the underlying purpose of the ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G procedure. The restriction of the P-T operating and test curves developed in accordance with ASME Code, Section XI, Appendix G procedure would challenge the operations staff when operating at low temperatures.

#### *Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action*

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes as set forth below, there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the use of the alternative analysis methods to support the revision of the P-T curves.

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 no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant

nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no 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 resource than those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for IP3, dated September 1972.

#### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

On November 20, 2003, the staff consulted with the New York State official, Mr. John Spath of the New York State Research and Development Authority, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State 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 May 28, 2003. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, Public File Area O1 F21, 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](mailto:pdr@nrc.gov).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 24th day of November 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Richard J. Laufer,**

*Chief, Section 1, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 03-29901 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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## **NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

### **Regulatory Guide; Issuance, Availability**

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has issued a revision of a guide in its Regulatory Guide Series. This series has been developed to describe and make available to the public such information as methods acceptable to the NRC staff for implementing specific parts of the NRC's regulations, techniques used by the staff in its review of applications for permits and licenses, and data needed by the NRC staff in its review of applications for permits and licenses.

Regulatory Guide 1.198, "Procedures and Criteria for Assessing Seismic Soil Liquefaction at Nuclear Power Plant Sites," has been developed to provide guidance to license applicants on acceptable methods for evaluating the potential for earthquake-induced instability of soils resulting from liquefaction and strength degradation. The guidance includes procedures and criteria currently applied to assess the liquefaction potential of soils ranging from gravel to clays.

Comments and suggestions in connection with items for inclusion in guides currently being developed or improvements in all published guides are encouraged at any time. Written comments may be submitted to the Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington DC 20555. Questions on the content of this guide may be directed to Mr. Y. Li, (301) 415-4141; email [yx11@nrc.gov](mailto:yx11@nrc.gov).

Regulatory guides are available for inspection or downloading at the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov> under Regulatory Guides and in NRC's Electronic Reading Room (ADAMS System) at the same site. Single copies of regulatory guides may be obtained free of charge by writing the Reproduction and Distribution Services Section, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by fax to (301) 415-2289, or by e-mail to [distribution@nrc.gov](mailto:distribution@nrc.gov). Issued guides may also be purchased from the

National Technical Information Service (NTIS) on a standing order basis. Details on this service may be obtained by writing NTIS at 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161; telephone 1-800-553-6847; <http://www.ntis.gov>. Regulatory guides are not copyrighted, and Commission approval is not required to reproduce them. (5 U.S.C. 552(a))

Dated at Rockville, MD this 21st day of November 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
**Ashok C. Thadani,**  
*Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.*

[FR Doc. 03-29900 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Pilot Program on the Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Enforcement Program; Request for Comments and Announcement of Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**ACTION:** Request for comments and announcement of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Commission has recently approved an NRC staff proposal to develop a pilot program on the use of "Alternative Dispute Resolution" (ADR) in cases involving the NRC's enforcement activities concerning allegations or findings of discrimination and other wrongdoing. See SECY-03-0115. "ADR" is a term that refers to a number of processes that can be used in assisting parties in resolving disputes and potential conflicts. Most of these processes are voluntary, where the parties to the dispute are in control of the decision on whether to participate in the process and whether to agree to any resolution of the dispute. The parties are assisted in their efforts to reach agreement by a neutral third party. The NRC staff is now proceeding to develop the policies and procedures for implementation of the pilot program. As an initial step in the development of the pilot program, the NRC will be holding a public workshop on December 10, 2003, at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Room 014B6, Rockville, Maryland, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. to discuss multiple issues. These issues include: (1) How should cases be selected for the use of ADR?, (2) What ADR processes should be used?, (3) What is the appropriate NRC involvement in the early ADR process?, (4) Who Should Participate in the ADR Process?, (5) How Should Neutrals Be

Selected?, (6) How Should Confidentiality Be Handled?, (7) What Information Concerning ADR Sessions Should Be Public?, (8) How Will NRC internal management procedures Be Impacted?, (9) How Will The Program Be Coordinated with NRC Enforcement Process? (10) What Training Will Be Done?, and (11) How Will The Program Be Evaluated? These issues are addressed in a document for comment on the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov>: select What We Do, Enforcement, then Alternative Dispute Resolution. This document is also available in ADAMS at ML033290248.

**DATES:** The comment period expires December 31, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written responses to the issues addressed in the "ADR Pilot Program Discussion Issues" document included on the ADR Web page to Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Hand deliver comments to: 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., Federal workdays. Comments may be submitted by e-mail to [nrcprep@nrc.gov](mailto:nrcprep@nrc.gov). Copies of comments received may be examined at the NRC's Public Document Room, located at One White Flint North (O1-F21), Rockville, Maryland, 20852-2738.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nick Hilton, Enforcement Specialist, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, (301) 415-2741, e-mail [ndh@nrc.gov](mailto:ndh@nrc.gov).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 25th day of November, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
**Frank J. Congel,**  
*Director, Office of Enforcement.*  
[FR Doc. 03-29902 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

*Upon Written Request, Copies Available From:* Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

**Extension:**

Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c), SEC File No. 270-264, OMB Control No. 3235-0341.

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Securities and Exchange Commission

("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

### Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c) Notices Regarding Exempt Transfer Agent Status

Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c) are used to document when transfer agents are exempt, or no longer exempt, from the minimum performance standards and certain recordkeeping provisions of the Commission's transfer agent rules. Rule 17Ad-4(c) sets forth the conditions under which a registered transfer agent loses its exempt status. Once the conditions for exemption no longer exist, the transfer agent, to keep the appropriate regulatory authority ("ARA") apprised of its current status, must prepare, and file if the ARA for the transfer agent is the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System ("BGFERS") or the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC"), a notice of loss of exempt status under paragraph (c). The transfer agent then cannot claim exempt status under Rule 17Ad-4(b) again until it remains subject to the minimum performance standards for non-exempt transfer agents for six consecutive months. The ARAs use the information contained in the notice to determine whether a registered transfer agent qualifies for the exemption, to determine when a registered transfer agent no longer qualifies for the exemption, and to determine the extent to which that transfer agent is subject to regulation.

The BGFERS receives approximately twelve notices of exempt status and six notices of loss of exempt status annually. The FDIC receives approximately eighteen notices of exempt status and three notices of loss of exempt status annually. The Commission and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency ("OCC") do not require transfer agent to file notice of exempt status or loss of exempt status. Instead, transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission or OCC need only to prepare and maintain these notices. The Commission estimates that approximately sixteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared annually by transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission. Similarly, the OCC estimates that the transfer agents for which it is the ARA prepare and maintain approximately fifteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status annually. Thus, a total of approximately seventy notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared and maintained by transfer