

NORTHEAST UTILITIES



THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY
THE HARTFORD ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY
WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ELECTRIC COMPANY
HOLYOKE WATER POWER COMPANY
NORTHEAST UTILITIES SERVICE COMPANY
NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY

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October 26, 1979

Docket No. 50-336

Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Attn: Mr. R. Reid, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch #4
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

References: (1) R. Reid letter to W. G. Council dated August 25, 1979.
(2) W. G. Council letter to R. Reid dated October 22, 1979.
(3) W. G. Council letter to R. Reid dated October 24, 1979.

Gentlemen:

Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 2
Feedwater System Piping

In Reference (1), the NRC Staff documented its requirement to:

"By October 31, 1979, commence an approach to cold shutdown to perform ultrasonic examination of the four affected welds using the same methods, techniques, and conditions as were used to previously characterize the indications."

Recent developments regarding system generating capacity in the New England area render it highly desirable to operate Millstone Unit No. 2 for an additional three days beyond October 31 to facilitate alleviation of the potential generating capacity shortage.

Numerous generating stations in the New England system are unavailable for service as a result of scheduled outages, outages longer in duration than originally anticipated, or component failures. The major base load units out of service and their associated approximate capacity include:

1280 311

7911010

3829

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CAPACITY, MW</u>
Bridgeport 3	400
Middletown 3	240
Norwalk 1	165
Brayton Point 3	650
Canal 2	585
New Boston 2	380
Salem Harbor 4	460
Yarmouth 4	620
Vermont Yankee	525
Maine Yankee	830
Yankee Rowe	175
Total	5,030

In addition, several other units in the New England area cannot achieve full power operation at this time for various reasons. Smaller (< 100 MW) units currently out of service are not included in the above listing. Currently, New England Power Exchange (NEPEX) is purchasing power from both the New Brunswick and New York areas. The transmission system has also been reconfigured to locally improve short-term reliability at the expense of system wide long-term reliability. Despite the above measures, the available reserve capacity is well below the optimum amount. The situation is further compounded by the unseasonably cold weather in the Northeast region at this time, resulting in higher than normal power demands for this time of year.

The above considerations summarize Northeast Nuclear Energy Company's (NNECO) basis for requesting authorization to defer the shutdown of Millstone Unit No. 2 until November 3, 1979. The additional time results in the following advantages:

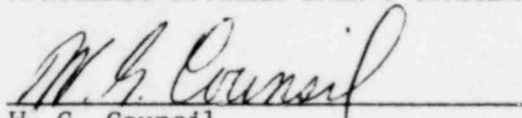
- (1) Additional time to complete outages on units currently unavailable. The low demand on weekends effectively alleviates the shortage until November 5, 1979.
- (2) Additional time to prepare for maximum utilization of the Housatonic River System for hydroelectric power. It is currently anticipated that this system will be utilized in a mode which has not occurred since approximately 1950. The resulting drain of the affected lakes/reservoirs could substantially impact the residents of the immediate area. Northeast Utilities plans to issue public announcements, such as full-page ads in local newspapers, to advise the communities and allow them sufficient time to prepare.
- (3) Reduction of the potential for utilizing gas turbines and peaking units thereby eliminating generating reserve capacity.
- (4) Substantial favorable economic impact to the NU system and its customers.

NNECO has reviewed the above request with respect to safety implications, and has determined that the proposed three-day deferral is thoroughly justified. The basis for this determination is summarized in References (2) and (3).

It is our current understanding that Reference (1) would require amending on or before October 31, 1979 to authorize our request. Your timely and favorable action would be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

NORTHEAST NUCLEAR ENERGY COMPANY

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W. G. Council", is written over a horizontal line.

W. G. Council
Vice President

1280 313