structure, system, or component does not meet established goals, appropriate corrective action shall be taken. For a nuclear power plant for which the licensee has submitted the certifications specified in § 50.82(a)(1), this section only shall apply to the extent that the licensee shall monitor the performance or condition of all structures, systems, or components associated with the storage, control, and maintenance of spent fuel in a safe condition, in a manner sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that such structures, systems, and components are capable of fulfilling their intended functions.

(2) Monitoring as specified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section is not required where it has been demonstrated that the performance or condition of a structure, system, or component is being effectively controlled through the performance of appropriate preventive maintenance, such that the structure, system, or component remains capable of performing its intended function.

(3) Performance and condition monitoring activities and associated goals and preventive maintenance activities shall be evaluated at least every refueling cycle provided the interval between evaluations does not exceed 24 months. The evaluations shall take into account, where practical, industry-wide operating experience. Adjustments shall be made where necessary to ensure that the objective of preventing failures of structures, systems, and components through maintenance is appropriately balanced against the objective of minimizing unavailability of structures, systems, and components due to monitoring or preventive maintenance.

(4) Before performing maintenance activities (including but not limited to surveillance, post-maintenance testing, and corrective and preventive maintenance), the licensee shall assess and manage the increase in risk that may result from the proposed maintenance activities. The scope of the assessment may be limited to structures, systems, and components that a risk-informed evaluation process has shown to be significant to public health and safety.

(b) The scope of the monitoring program specified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section shall include safety related and nonsafety related structures, systems, and components, as follows:

(1) Safety-related structures, systems and components that are relied upon to remain functional during and following design basis events to ensure the integrity of the reactor coolant pressure boundary, the capability to shut down the reactor and maintain it in a safe shutdown condition, or the capability to prevent or mitigate the consequences of accidents that could result in potential offsite exposure comparable to the guidelines in § 50.34(a)(1), § 50.67(b)(2), or § 100.11 of this chapter, as applicable.

(2) Nonsafety related structures, systems, or components:

(i) That are relied upon to mitigate accidents or transients or are used in plant emergency operating procedures (EOPs); or

(ii) Whose failure could prevent safety-related structures, systems, and components from fulfilling their safety-related function; or

(iii) Whose failure could cause a reactor scram or actuation of a safety-related system.

(c) The requirements of this section shall be implemented by each licensee no later than July 10, 1996.

[56 FR 31324, July 10, 1991, as amended at 58 FR 33996, June 23, 1993; 61 FR 39301, July 29, 1996; 61 FR 65173, Dec. 11, 1996; 62 FR 47271, Sept. 8, 1997; 62 FR 59276, Nov. 3, 1997; 64 FR 38557, July 19, 1999; 64 FR 72001, Dec. 23, 1999]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: See 64 FR 38551, July 19, 1999, for effectiveness of § 50.65 (a)(3) and (a)(4).

§ 50.66 Requirements for thermal annealing of the reactor pressure vessel.

(a) For those light water nuclear power reactors where neutron radiation has reduced the fracture toughness of the reactor vessel materials, a thermal annealing may be applied to the reactor vessel to recover the fracture toughness of the material. The use of a thermal annealing treatment is subject to the requirements in this section. A report describing the licensee's plan for conducting the thermal annealing must be submitted in accordance with § 50.4 at least three years prior to the date at which the limiting

fracture toughness criteria in §50.61 or appendix G to part 50 would be exceeded. Within three years of the submittal of the Thermal Annealing Report and at least thirty days prior to the start of the thermal annealing, the NRC will review the Thermal Annealing Report and make available the results of its evaluation at the NRC Web site, *http://www.nrc.gov*. The licensee may begin the thermal anneal after:

(1) Submitting the Thermal Annealing Report required by paragraph (b) of this section;

(2) The NRC makes available the results of its evaluation of the Thermal Annealing Report at the NRC Web site, *http://www.nrc.gov;* and

(3) The requirements of paragraph (f)(1) of this section have been satisfied.

(b) *Thermal Annealing Report*. The Thermal Annealing Report must include: a Thermal Annealing Operating Plan; a Requalification Inspection and Test Program; a Fracture Toughness Recovery and Reembrittlement Trend Assurance Program; and an Identification of Changes Requiring a License Amendment.

(1) *Thermal Annealing Operating Plan*. The thermal annealing operating plan must include:

(i) A detailed description of the pressure vessel and all structures and components that are expected to experience significant thermal or stress effects during the thermal annealing operation;

(ii) An evaluation of the effects of mechanical and thermal stresses and temperatures on the vessel, containment, biological shield, attached piping and appurtenances, and adjacent equipment and components to demonstrate that operability of the reactor will not be detrimentally affected. This evaluation must include:

(A) Detailed thermal and structural analyses to establish the time and temperature profile of the annealing operation. These analyses must include heatup and cooldown rates, and must demonstrate that localized temperatures, thermal stress gradients, and subsequent residual stresses will not result in unacceptable dimensional changes or distortions in the vessel, attached piping and appurtenances, and that the thermal annealing cycle will not result in unacceptable degradation of the fatigue life of these components.

(B) The effects of localized high temperatures on degradation of the concrete adjacent to the vessel and changes in thermal and mechanical properties, if any, of the reactor vessel insulation, and on detrimental effects, if any, on containment and the biological shield. If the design temperature limitations for the adjacent concrete structure are to be exceeded during the thermal annealing operation, an acceptable maximum temperature for the concrete must be established for the annealing operation using appropriate test data.

(iii) The methods, including heat source, instrumentation and procedures proposed for performing the thermal annealing. This shall include any special precautions necessary to minimize occupational exposure, in accordance with the As Low As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA) principle and the provisions of §20.1206.

(iv) The proposed thermal annealing operating parameters, including bounding conditions for temperatures and times, and heatup and cooldown schedules.

(A) The thermal annealing time and temperature parameters selected must be based on projecting sufficient recovery of fracture toughness, using the procedures of paragraph (e) of this section, to satisfy the requirements of §50.60 and §50.61 for the proposed period of operation addressed in the application.

(B) The time and temperature parameters evaluated as part of the thermal annealing operating plan, and supported by the evaluation results of paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section, represent the bounding times and temperatures for the thermal annealing operation. If these bounding conditions for times and temperatures are violated during the thermal annealing operation, then the annealing operation is considered not in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan, as required by paragraph (c)(1) of this section, and the licensee must comply with paragraph (c)(2) of this section.

(2) *Requalification Inspection and Test Program.* The inspection and test program to requalify the annealed reactor vessel must include the detailed monitoring, inspections, and tests proposed to demonstrate that the limitations on temperatures, times and temperature profiles, and stresses evaluated for the proposed thermal annealing conditions of paragraph (b)(1)(iv) of this section have not been exceeded, and to determine the thermal annealing time and temperature to be used in quantifying the fracture toughness recovery. The requalification inspection and test program must demonstrate that the thermal annealing operation has not degraded the reactor vessel, attached piping or appurtenances, or the adjacent concrete structures to a degree that could affect the safe operation of the reactor.

(3) *Fracture Toughness Recovery and Reembrittlement Trend Assurance Program.* The percent recovery of RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy due to the thermal annealing treatment must be determined based on the time and temperature of the actual vessel thermal anneal. The recovery of RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy provide the basis for establishing the post-anneal RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy for each vessel material. Changes in the RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy with subsequent plant operation must be determined using the post-anneal values of these parameters in conjunction with the projected reembrittlement trend determined in accordance with paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section. Recovery and reembrittlement evaluations shall include:

(i) *Recovery Evaluations.* (A) The percent recovery of both RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy must be determined by one of the procedures described in paragraph (e) of this section, using the proposed lower bound thermal annealing time and temperature conditions described in the operating plan.

(B) If the percent recovery is determined from testing surveillance specimens or from testing materials removed from the reactor vessel, then it shall be demonstrated that the proposed thermal annealing parameters used in the test program are equal to or bounded by those used in the vessel annealing operation.

(C) If generic computational methods are used, appropriate justification must be submitted as a part of the application.

(ii) *Reembrittlement Evaluations.* (A) The projected post-anneal reembrittlement of RT_{NDT} must be calculated using the procedures in § 50.61(c), or must be determined using the same basis as that used for the pre-anneal operating period. The projected change due to post-anneal reembrittlement for Charpy upper-shelf energy must be determined using the same basis as that used for the pre-anneal operating period.

(B) The post-anneal reembrittlement trend of both RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy must be estimated, and must be monitored using a surveillance program defined in the Thermal Annealing Report and which conforms to the intent of appendix H of this part, ''Reactor Vessel Material Surveillance Program Requirements.''

(4) *Identification of Changes Requiring a License Amendment.* Any changes to the facility as described in the final safety analysis report (as updated) which requires a license amendment pursuant to § 50.59(c)(2) of this part, and any changes to the Technical Specifications, which are necessary to either conduct the thermal annealing or to operate the nuclear power reactor following the annealing must be identified. The section shall demonstrate that the Commission's requirements continue to be complied with, and that there is reasonable assurance of adequate protection to the public health and safety following the changes.

(c) *Completion or Termination of Thermal Annealing.* (1) If the thermal annealing was completed in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and the Requalification Inspection and Test Program, the licensee shall so confirm in writing to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. The licensee may restart its reactor after the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(2) If the thermal annealing was completed but the annealing was not performed in accordance with the Thermal

Annealing Operating Plan and the Requalification Inspection and Test Program, the licensee shall submit a summary of lack of compliance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and the Requalification Inspection and Test Program and a justification for subsequent operation to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. Any changes to the facility as described in the final safety analysis report (as updated) which are attributable to the noncompliances and which require a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) and any changes to the Technical Specifications shall also be identified.

(i) If no changes requiring a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) or changes to Technical Specifications are identified, the licensee may restart its reactor after the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(ii) If any changes requiring a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) or changes to the Technical Specifications are identified, the licensee may not restart its reactor until approval is obtained from the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(3) If the thermal annealing was terminated prior to completion, the licensee shall immediately notify the NRC of the premature termination of the thermal anneal.

(i) If the partial annealing was otherwise performed in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and relevant portions of the Requalification Inspection and Test Program, and the licensee does not elect to take credit for any recovery, the licensee need not submit the Thermal Annealing Results Report required by paragraph (d) of this section but instead shall confirm in writing to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation that the partial annealing was otherwise performed in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and relevant portions of the Requalification Inspection and Test Program. The licensee may restart its reactor after the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(ii) If the partial annealing was otherwise performed in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and relevant portions of the Requalification Inspection and Test Program, and the licensee elects to take full or partial credit for the partial annealing, the licensee shall confirm in writing to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation that the partial annealing was otherwise performed in compliance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and relevant portions of the Requalification Inspection and Test Program. The licensee may restart its reactor after the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(iii) If the partial annealing was not performed in accordance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and the Requalification Inspection and Test Program, the licensee shall submit a summary of lack of compliance with the Thermal Annealing Operating Plan and the Requalification Inspection and Test Program and a justification for subsequent operation to the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. Any changes to the facility as described in the final safety analysis report (as updated) which are attributable to the noncompliances and which require a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) and any changes to the technical specifications which are required as a result of the noncompliances, shall also be identified.

(A) If no changes requiring a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) or changes to Technical Specifications are identified, the licensee may restart its reactor after the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(B) If any changes requiring a license amendment pursuant to §50.59(c)(2) or changes to Technical Specifications are identified, the licensee may not restart its reactor until approval is obtained from the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and the requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this section have been met.

(d) *Thermal Annealing Results Report.* Every licensee that either completes a thermal annealing, or that terminates an annealing but elects to take full or

partial credit for the annealing, shall provide the following information within three months of completing the thermal anneal, unless an extension is authorized by the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation:

(1) The time and temperature profiles of the actual thermal annealing;

(2) The post-anneal RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy values of the reactor vessel materials for use in subsequent reactor operation;

(3) The projected post-anneal reembrittlement trends for both RT_{NDT} and Charpy upper-shelf energy; and

(4) The projected values of RT_{PTS} and Charpy upper-shelf energy at the end of the proposed period of operation addressed in the Thermal Annealing Report.

(e) *Procedures for Determining the Recovery of Fracture Toughness.* The procedures of this paragraph must be used to determine the percent recovery of ΔRT_{NDT}, R_t, and percent recovery of Charpy upper-shelf energy, R_u. In all cases, R_t and R_u may not exceed 100.

(1) For those reactors with surveillance programs which have developed credible surveillance data as defined in § 50.61, percent recovery due to thermal annealing (R_t and R_u) must be evaluated by testing surveillance specimens that have been withdrawn from the surveillance program and that have been annealed under the same time and temperature conditions as those given the beltline material.

(2) Alternatively, the percent recovery due to thermal annealing (R_t and R_u) may be determined from the results of a verification test program employing materials removed from the beltline region of the reactor vessel[6] and that have been annealed under the same time and temperature conditions as those given the beltline material.

(3) Generic computational methods may be used to determine recovery if adequate justification is provided.

[6] For those cases where materials are removed from the beltline of the pressure vessel, the stress limits of the applicable portions of the ASME Code Section III must be satisfied, including consideration of fatigue and corrosion, regardless of the Code of record for the vessel design.

(f) *Public information and participation.* (1) Upon receipt of a Thermal Annealing Report, and a minimum of 30 days before the licensee starts thermal annealing, the Commission shall:

(i) Notify and solicit comments from local and State governments in the vicinity of the site where the thermal annealing will take place and any Indian Nation or other indigenous people that have treaty or statutory rights that could be affected by the thermal annealing,

(ii) Publish a notice of a public meeting in the FEDERAL REGISTER and in a forum, such as local newspapers, which is readily accessible to individuals in the vicinity of the site, to solicit comments from the public, and

(iii) Hold a public meeting on the licensee's Thermal Annealing Report.

(2) Within 15 days after the NRC's receipt of the licensee submissions required by paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2) and (c)(3)(i) through (iii) of this section, the NRC staff shall make available at the NRC Web site, *http://www.nrc.gov*, a summary of its inspection of the licensee's thermal annealing, and the Commission shall hold a public meeting:

(i) For the licensee to explain to NRC and the public the results of the reactor pressure vessel annealing,

(ii) for the NRC to discuss its inspection of the reactor vessel annealing, and

(iii) for the NRC to receive public comments on the annealing.

(3) Within 45 days of NRC's receipt of the licensee submissions required by paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2) and (c)(3)(i) through (iii) of this section, the NRC staff shall complete full documentation of its inspection of the licensee's annealing process and make available this documentation at the NRC Web site, *http://www.nrc.gov*.

[60 FR 65472, Dec. 19, 1995, as amended at 64 FR 48952, Sept. 9, 1999; 64 FR 53613, Oct. 4, 1999]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: See 64 FR 53582, Oct. 4, 1999, for effectiveness of § 50.66 (b) introductory text, paragraphs (b)(4), (c)(2), and (c)(3)(iii).