HarrisCEm Resource

From: Butch Turk [butch@wildrockies.org]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2008 3:30 PM
To: HarrisCOLEIS Resource
Subject: Shearon Harris nukes

Dear NRC folks,

Re: Progress Energy's application to build two reactors at Shearon Harris

I am completely opposed to new nuclear power plant construction for the following reasons:

1. Pursuing new plants is squandering our chances to slow global warming. Quicker, safer and far more economical ways to cut greenhouse gases are in place. To hold atmospheric carbon dioxide at Year 2000 levels, up to 3,000 new nuclear reactors would be needed by 2050 (Council on Foreign Relations, April 2007), far exceeding global construction and financial capacity. Each plant takes 10-15 years to build. And despite industry claims, nuclear power generates substantial greenhouse emissions during both construction and the energy-intensive fuel cycle.

2. Cost estimates have risen six-fold since 2002 – now $7 to
12 billion dollars per reactor – and would go higher if one is ever completed. The nuclear industry insists taxpayers pay billions in subsidies for new plants, and Wall Street won't finance them without 100% taxpayer backing, due to risk of cancellation.

3. New projects could fail in midstream for numerous reasons, as happened with scores of U.S. plants in the 1980s – including nine by Progress Energy and Duke Energy. That's why in 2007, those companies and their NC legislative allies transferred to the public tens of billions of dollars in risk for new plants.
A severe accident or attack at any plant, design flaws, construction delays, or market changes could cause new projects to fail, leaving customers with the bill.

4. Nuclear plants are vulnerable to sabotage and acts of insanity.
Due to industry cost-cutting pressure, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in January 2007 decided not to require plant owners to defend against various air attacks or more than a handful of attackers by ground. (1/30/07 Associated Press)

5. The industry insists that taxpayers insure new reactors, belying their claim about new designs being safer. Federal studies (e.g. 1997 Brookhaven National Lab) show that accidents could cost a half-trillion dollars in off-site damage.

6. Nuclear waste is a permanent risk. Pro-industry NRC Commissioner Ed McGaffigan admitted in 2007 that the proposed Yucca Mountain dump is very unlikely ever to open. Even if it did, highly radioactive fuel rods will be stored at Shearon Harris and other plants for decades in the most dangerous way possible: high density cooling pools. Harris has the largest nuclear waste pools in the U.S.

7. Current aging plants are more dangerous than ever due to
technical failures, cost-cutting pressures, and unresolved design flaws. 51 times, U.S. plants have been shut down for over a year to restore minimum safety levels. Problems and extended outages would be more likely with new, untested reactor designs.

8. Nukes are increasingly unreliable due to climate change.
The reactors Duke and Progress want to build use up to 60 million gallons of water a day. They will suffer even more shutdowns as droughts and heat waves increase.

9. New plants are not needed. There's a belated but fast-moving national demand for efficiency, solar and wind power – which can more than offset even growing demand. Free markets and private investors are proving that clean power boosts energy security and creates thousands of jobs.

Please address each of these issues throughout the licensing process.

Sincerely,
Larry Turk

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