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Wednesday, July 18, 2007

[_The Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Reactor Accident Worse Than Three Mile Island_](#)
 (<http://greennuclearbutterfly.blogspot.com/2007/07/kashiwazaki-kariwa-reactor-accident.html>)

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 With each passing hour, with each passing day, the reports coming out of Japan make it clear that the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant accident is in some ways far worse than the accident at Three Mile Island, and citizens in the area surrounding the reactors are in grave peril as long as these seven reactors owned by the Tokyo Electric Power Company are in operation. As information comes streaming in, as the damage estimates and contamination amounts grow, one thing is obvious...all seven Kashiwazaki-Kariwa reactors are in serious trouble, and need to be decommissioned in the name of public health and safety. To do other wise exposes the citizens of Japan to a nuclear disaster potentially far more devastating than Hiroshima ever was.

In the early hours following the 6.8 on the richter scale earthquake, officials at Tokyo Electric Power knew they were in trouble, but refused to sound the alarm, waiting hours to inform the authorities that they were in trouble. Instead, they down played both the damage at the facilities, and the risk to human health and the environment, claiming the only damage suffered was a small transformer fire...suppose they (company management) were blinded to the obvious, which included buckled sidewalks, huge cracks and heaves in the plants road system, and concrete barriers tossed about like a child's Lego set.

With each passing hour, the reports have grown more severe, the contaminant issues growing expodentially. For instance, the tipped barrel of radioactively contaminated materials went to a few, to fifty, then to 100, and now the count is 400 barrels of spilled contents. A leak of materials into the environment was originally stated as being less than two liters now stands at almost 400 gallons of highly toxic waste savagely dumped into the Japanese Sea, potentially threatening the fishing industry of the area. Additionally, we now know that an undisclosed amount of Cobalt 60, and other highly dangerous,

cancer causing radioactive contaminants escaped into the air...with NO WARNING TO THE CITIZENS!

The Mayor of Kashiwazaki, Hiroshi Aida tired of the lies and coverup by TEPCO has acted both quickly and decisively in ordering the entire facility closed until it can prove to the citizens it is a safe site that can be operated safely. If the mayor sticks to his guns, it may be impossible for TEPCO to prove these seven reactors are safe. New geographical information coming out into the light of day shows A) that the quake far exceeded the design basis criteria for the plants, which were only designed to survive a quake of a magnitude of 6.5, instead of the 6.8 quake that demolished much of the reactor site, and B) it is now believed that at least one of the reactors actually sits directly atop a fault line.

In an attempt at damage control, in their drive for a Nuclear Renaissance, the heavy hitters within the nuclear industry are out in force downplaying the significance of the event, and offering Tokyo Electric Power whatever help is needed in getting the reactors back up online. Sad to think that political and financial agendas are taking a front seat to human health and safety, but if some of the remarks on the NEI Blog are any example, that is just what we are seeing. IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei was quick to offer aid, saying he would be more than willing to put together a team of foremost experts from around the world, but then discredited himself and the IAEA by being quick to point out (without even having seen the damage) that he was sure the basic structural stability of the reactors was probably fine.

The NRC was/is not much better, caring more about political spin, and keeping the GNEP, Nuclear Renaissance ball moving down the field than seeing to the safety of almost 100,000 Japanese citizens, even if it means losing seven of their precious reactors. Expecting Entergy to trot out any minute to the press to announce they are sending Paul Newman over to take a personal tour of the site, and give it a clean bill of health to resume operations. In a perfect Bill Clinton, George Bush tag team, Entergy could also snag Patrick Moore...after all, he never met a corporate jet and a \$15,000 check he did not like. Entergy could make it the Three Musketeers by rounding off the group with Christine Todd Whitman. We'll call it the CASEnergy Nuclear Diplomatic Tour.

Face it folks...the longer reactors are up and running, the closer we are getting to a disaster of Biblical Proportions, and try as they might, the Nuclear Energy Institute and the trouble plagued industry they represent cannot hide the horrid truths forever. A perfect example of the twisted lies told to protect the industry can be found in the differing views offered to the Press from a TEPCO spokesman, and a spokesman for Japan's Meteorological Agency. To mitigate public image damage, and the very real risk of having their reactors permanently shut down and decommissioned, TEPCO spokesperson Hiroshi Itagaki said aftershock data indicate a fault under the ocean floor near the plant. Meteorological Agency official Osamu Kamigaichi paints a far more troublesome picture though when discussing the EXACT SAME DATA when he stated to the press that the fault line runs directly under the plant, and that one reactor may actually sit directly on top of the fault line.

Entergy's Indian Point and numerous other aging and brittle reactors also sit on or near MAJOR earthquake fault lines, and a quake of similar numbers to the one in Japan would more than likely split the cores like an over ripe melon. Our own reports from various people we have spoken with who are familiar with Entergy's problem plagued Indian Point reactors, which are leaking

tritium and strontium 90 into the Hudson River lead us to believe that most of the sensors installed over 30 years ago to detect and record earthquake activity at the Indian point site are not only outdated and obsolete, but in too many cases are no longer functioning. One thing is certain...a earthquake of significant proportion at a site such as Indian Point, or California's Diablo Canyon would cause catastrophic harm, and financial damages would run into the hundreds of billions if not trillions of dollars. If New Orleans is any example, such and event would all but destroy New York City as we know it today.

Hideyuki Ban, director of the civil group Citizen's Nuclear Information Center was quoted by the press "Japan has a dense population so the human damage would be major here. There would be many deaths," and "I think that a quake-prone country should phase out its use of nuclear power." He is absolutely correct. Neither America or Japan needs another Chernobyl or Hiroshima on their shores, yet the IAEA, NRC and the NEI seem willing to risk just that in their push to revitalize a failing industry. The NRC's rubberstamping of license renewal applications to maintain the nuclear industry's market share has got to come to a screeching halt. Here in New York we have 21 million people living within 50 miles of the crumbling Indian Point nuclear reactors, and a quake similiar to the one in Japan could potentially kill hundreds of thousands of those innocent people.

Nuclear energy is neither safe, nor green, and the time to seek a different pathway to energy independence without nuclear is upon us.

This article was written for my blog, The Green Nuclear Butterfly originally.

<http://greennuclearbutterfly.blogspot.com>

Anti-Nuclear activist, and publisher of two blogs on the subject of nuclear energy. Living less than three miles from Entergy's Indian Point, which is leaking tritium and strontium 90 into the Hudson, I write in the hopes of awakening the public to the horrors that are nuclear energy. NEI's (Nuclear Energy Institute) lies about nuclear energy being carbon free have to be exposed, their incestous relationship with the NRC and DOE has to be brought into the light of day, the wrongful rubber stamping of license renewals ended before and American Chernobyl occurs.

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