

Keegan, Elaine

From: Gail Vaughn [vaughn.gail@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2009 1:00 PM
To: Keegan, Elaine
Subject: public comment on Prairie Island nuclear plant license renewal

Dear Ms. Keegan,

I only just now received notice from the NRC of this public hearing tomorrow:

NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL

The notice I have in hand says that yesterday was the deadline for registering to comment at this hearing. That deadline is passed, but I am writing you anyway.

I cannot attend tomorrow's hearing in person. The weather is too bitter for me to be away from my wood-heated cabin for long enough to travel to Red Wing for the afternoon.

I live in Ferryville Wisconsin, right on the Mississippi River. So I am a direct downriver 'beneficiary' of the radioactive pollutants emitted by the Prairie Island nuclear reactors.

I have been living in hope that they would be shut down in the next couple of years, as their licenses dictate. I have been hoping that we could make it successfully to shutdown without a really major accident at Red Wing, and that the environs could then start to heal. This happened in my own neighborhood when the reactor at Genoa WI was shut down, in the 80's; after that shutdown, the cancer rates in the neighborhood began to go down to more normal levels.

But no, Xcel wants to continue operating the reactors for much longer, and not only that, but increase the rate at which they run.

They PROMISED they would abide by the original deadlines, and they PROMISED they would not come back for more nuclear waste storage on site at Prairie Island; but they can't keep promises. They will never stop operating these facilities, as long as the govt. lets them run them, until something goes really really wrong.

We have never come up with a solution for long-term storage of nuclear waste. It is morally wrong to continue to manufacture this waste and expect our children to come up with a storage solution. The electricity will be long gone by then. It will be much as it is at Genoa, where they pay over a million \$ a year to baby-sit the nuclear waste there, even though there hasn't been any electricity since the 80's. I have never seen a single light bulb lit by the power from that reactor. A million dollars a year is a large burden for the ratepayers of a small cooperative utility. The Prairie Island legacy will dwarf that.

Please DENY the permit for continued operation of these reactors. They should be shut down ASAP, not allowed to operate even longer, and faster. The situation reminds me very much of the voyage of the Titanic, where they noted that there were many icebergs in their lane, but inexplicably they decided to SPEED UP. Ever since then, the very name has been associated with folly and disaster.

Please accept this heartfelt comment for your public comment files: SHUT THEM DOWN.
I cannot think of a more important issue for the health and safety of the upper Midwest.
Thank you.

-Gail Vaughn
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