

## AP1000DCDCEm Resource

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**From:** Robert Mueller [4dbob@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 21, 2011 6:10 PM  
**To:** Rulemaking Comments  
**Subject:** Stop the AP1000 (Docket ID NRC-2010-0131)

Dear Secretary Vietti-Cook,

In the wake of the crisis at Fukushima, it has become clear that we cannot afford to take any unnecessary risks when building nuclear reactors. Because disaster can occur at any nuclear reactor, the NRC needs to ensure that it has taken all possible precautions before moving forward with the new Westinghouse AP1000 reactor design considered for construction in Georgia, South Carolina and other states.

Addressing safety concerns, not satisfying the industry, should be the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's primary concern. NRC engineer John S. Ma's non-concurrence with the review of the reactor raised the possibility that the AP1000's shield building could shatter "like a glass cup." It would be indefensible for the NRC to move forward without further addressing that weakness. Also, Westinghouse has not satisfactorily proved that the thin steel containment shell over the reactor would be effective during severe accidents or that the reactor could be properly cooled in conditions similar to those at Fukushima.

Especially considering the ongoing crisis in Japan and the review which will take place when the situation is brought under control, the current 75-day public comment period on the reactor design is insufficient for the new AP1000 reactor. I request that the NRC put the license application on hold until a thorough review of the Japanese accident has been conducted and weaknesses in the AP1000 design have been reviewed in light of the accident. To stick with the grossly inadequate 75-day rulemaking comment period would be the height of irresponsibility by the NRC.

Also, please accept the petition filed by the twelve environmental organizations of the AP1000 Oversight Group to suspend rulemaking. To ensure transparency, please include this comment and all others in the formal review proceedings and post them in the NRC's online library so the public can see any expressed concerns.

While I am impressed with the spirit of Westinghouse in working to create a safer nuclear reactor design, there is no way these projects should move forward until the potential weaknesses in the system cited above are empirically shown to not be of concern.

Additionally, I wish to say we should be designing Thorium reactors, and never build another Uranium or Plutonium Reactor again. If the AP1000 is indeed designed to utilize this abundant element, bravo. If not, send Westinghouse back to the drawing board.

A few weeks before the tsunami struck Fukushima's uranium reactors and shattered public faith in nuclear power, China revealed that it was launching a rival technology to build a safer, cleaner, and ultimately cheaper network of reactors based on thorium.

China's Academy of Sciences said it had chosen a "thorium-based molten salt reactor system". The liquid fuel idea was pioneered by US physicists at Oak Ridge National Lab in the 1960s, but the US has long since dropped the ball.

Hazardous waste will be a thousand times less than with uranium. The system is inherently less prone to disaster. "The reactor has an amazing safety feature," said Kirk Sorensen, a former NASA engineer at Teledyne Brown and a thorium expert. "If it begins to overheat, a little plug melts and the salts drain into a pan.

There is no need for computers, or the sort of electrical pumps that were crippled by the tsunami. The reactor saves itself," he said.

"They operate at atmospheric pressure so you don't have the sort of hydrogen explosions we've seen in Japan."

As a happy bonus, it can burn plutonium and toxic waste from old reactors, reducing radio-toxicity and acting as an eco-cleaner.

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/comment/ambroseevans\\_pritchard/8393984/Safe-nuclear-does-exist-and-China-is-leading-the-way-with-thorium.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/comment/ambroseevans_pritchard/8393984/Safe-nuclear-does-exist-and-China-is-leading-the-way-with-thorium.html)

Please consider this:

- \* a ton of thorium can produce as much energy as 200 tons of uranium, or 3,500,000 tons of coal.
- \* reduces the storage of nuclear waste by up to 50 percent.
- \* no possibility of a meltdown.
- \* helps sever the link between nuclear power generation and nuclear weapons.
- \* produces 10 to 10,000 times less long-lived radioactive waste.
- \* comes out of the ground as a 100% pure, usable isotope, which does not require enrichment.
- \* there is enough thorium in the United States alone to power the country at its current energy level for over 1,000 years.

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