

WCRM-GEIS2CEm Resource

From: Roland [jroland@email.t-com.hr]
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The only solution to the high-level radioactive waste (HLRW) problem is to not generate irradiated nuclear fuel in the first place. Our society's "preferred alternative" to nuclear power and the forever deadly radioactive waste it inevitably generates is efficiency and renewables, such as wind and solar power. As Dr. Arjun Makhijani, President of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, showed in his 2007 book Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free: A Roadmap to U.S. Energy Policy, both fossil fuels and nuclear power can be completely phased out of the U.S. economy by 2040, and replaced by efficiency and renewables, without any further technological breakthroughs required, and for the same percentage of GDP as currently spend on dirty, dangerous, and expensive fossil fuels and nuclear power.

For the HLRWs that already exist, require Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS). Hundreds of environmental and public interest groups, representing all 50 states, have endorsed the Statement of Principles for Safeguarding Nuclear Waste at Reactors, which describes HOSS. Where possible, densely-packed, vulnerable HLRW storage pools, at risk of catastrophic fires and radioactivity releases, should be emptied into on-site dry cask storage that is "hardened"; designed and built well, safeguarded against accidents, fortified against attacks, and protected against leakage into the environment. This should be expedited as a national security top priority. Locations where HOSS is not safe (places vulnerable to flooding, for example), hardened dry cask storage should be done as close to the wastes' point of generation as possible, as safely as possible. HOSS must be monitored and retrievable, and is but an interim measure. HOSS cannot be a permanent measure on the sea coasts and fresh water sources (rivers, lakes, reservoirs), due to rising sea levels and risk of leakage into vital drinking water supplies.

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