

WCRM-GEIS1CEm Resource

From: Sierra Club [information@sierraclub.org] on behalf of Dennis Lewis [dennisclewis@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2013 10:25 PM
To: RulemakingComments Resource
Subject: Protect our communities from radioactive waste!

Sep 22, 2013

Allison McFarlane

Dear McFarlane,

I am writing you because I am concerned about how we store our most hazardous waste, the radioactive fuel rods from nuclear reactors. We should not license or re-license any reactor until it has been proven that we can successfully isolate this waste.

I attended college with a geology major in the 1970s. He informed me back then as a student of earth materials, that there was no safe way to store nuclear waste for the duration of its danger range. He was proven right. He went on to work as a scientist for the U.S. government testifying as an expert regarding ground water. I was thankful for his work and glad to call him a friend.

While you are working on the solution to numerous crises in the US, I am also concerned that many of our nuclear reactors have over-crowded fuel pools on site. These reservoirs present safety threats to the communities and industries that surround the plants. The NRC should take immediate action to reduce the number of fuel assemblies in the water-filled pools. Before transferring the fuel rods to cask storage, the cask storage needs to be examined and reinforced to be able to safely store the fuel rods particularly those that qualify as high burn up fuel. Hardened on-site storage containers for the casks must be a secondary barrier to protect the environment from cask failure. I realize I am asking a lot of you, but there is no other way. The proof of being able to safely store nuclear waste is one of the requirements of continuing to use the technology. We didn't device a fail-safe method in the 70s as my friend warned, and you better do it now.

I am also concerned about the sustainability of nuclear power. The EIS needs to evaluate the true costs of nuclear power after the subsidies are stripped away. The long-term costs of decommissioning need to be considered as well. The ongoing costs to US taxpayers should be transparent in this EIS.

Finally, the EIS should consider the option of not making any nuclear waste at all in the future. You need to compare the environmental footprint of nuclear power considering the costs of mining and long term waste disposal to that of renewables and energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

Dennis Lewis
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