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Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

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Comment On: NRC-2015-0111-0001
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.; Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station; Draft Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact; Request for Comment

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General Comment

These comments are in regard to Docket ID = NRC-2015-0111.

We want to go on record opposing granting Vermont Yankee Entergy, Inc. the exemptions they are requesting: an exemption to no longer fund the 10 mile EPZ, and increasing the notification time if there was a problem at VY from the present 15 minutes to 60 minutes.

The Town of Greenfield, part of which is in the EPZ and has a reception center at Greenfield Community College has written a letter and resolution opposing the exemptions. Also, the Towns of Gill, Bernardston and Warwick have written letters opposing these exemptions.

We support the state of Vermont who oppose granting these exemptions. The public needs to be protected now more than ever, especially in regard to the threat of terrorism since 9/11 and weather related disasters like what occurred in Fukushima. Presently, Vermont Yankees temporary spent fuel pool has 5 times the amount of high-level radioactive waste than it was designed to hold, and it will remain in the storage pool at least till 2020, at risk of fire and catastrophic radioactivity release. Also, continued staff downsizing at VY could potentially contribute to faulty calculations and problems at VY, as we have seen after the plant shut down on Dec. 30. This news and the fact that Vermont Yankee has had numerous leaks, discoveries of underground pipes, and other discrepancies in the past is very worrisome to those of us who live in the area. We question whether or not the downsized staff and security during decommissioning would be sufficient to protect the public from outside

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threats, weather-related disasters, and faulty calculations. Public safety should be the number one concern during decommissioning and the public needs to be protected and give enough notice in case we need to evacuate!

As a resident of Massachusetts, we feel that we have a very limited role as citizens in the decommissioning. Vermont has practically none; Massachusetts has none, even though more people live within ten miles of the reactor in NH & MA than in Vermont! That's just wrong.

We support the State of Vermont, Sen. Sanders and Massachusetts Senator Markey co-sponsoring the Senate Bill: The Nuclear Plant Decommissioning Act that would ensure that states and local communities have a meaningful role in the crafting and preparation of decommissioning plans for retired nuclear plants located in those areas. The bill also requires NRC to publicly and transparently approve or reject every proposed decommissioning plan, which it currently is not required to do.

Also, VY is located near an elementary school, is in the middle of a village, is located on 124 acres, compared to other nuclear plants located on much larger footprints of 6,700 to 12,000 acres. Michael Howe, FEMA nuclear health physicist, says that as long as highly radioactive nuclear fuel is hot, even if it's in the spent fuel pool, emergency planning, including plans for mass evacuation is necessary.

We call on you, the NRC and other state and federal officials to fulfill your obligation to insure public safety, by continuing and maintaining the Emergency Planning Zone for Vermont Yankee, and give citizens in VT, MA and NH more input into decommissioning plans at VY.

Submitted by:
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