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From: Ace Hoffman [mailto:rhoffman@animatedsoftware.com]

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 11:33 AM

Subject: [External_Sender] Correction to yesterday's newsletter: Darrell Issa's New Nuclear Waste Policy Act (H. R. 474)

February 13, 2017

Dear Readers,

In my newsletter yesterday, I erred in implying that there will be no concrete overpack for the thin (1/2 inch to 5/8ths inch) stainless steel canisters of spent nuclear fuel to be stored at the WCS facility in Texas. Also, the proposed Holtec location in New Mexico will actually be a honeycomb structure, not a flat concrete pad (it will be similar to what is being built at San Onofre, but for many more containers).

However, neither of these differences improve matters much, because first of all, the concrete overpack and superstructure seriously impact an outside inspection of the dry casks: At best, some areas of the casks will be observable by remote-control robots that have not yet been designed, but even then, the most critical areas (the areas around support structures and other pressure points) will still be out of view. How often any inspections will be done is also a matter of speculation: Recalling that San Onofre faked its fire inspection rounds for five years does not give any assurance of confidence. Furthermore, the insides of the casks will have no monitoring whatsoever. By the time a crack reaches the outer edge, it will be too late to do anything. Attempting to lift a cracked canister could expose the entire contents, and even a microscopic through-wall crack could release "millions of Curies" of radiation, to quote Dr. Kris Singh of Holtec.

Perhaps more troubling is that the concrete overpacks at the WCS facility are not able to withstand the impact of a large aircraft; the fuel containers inside are sure to be damaged in a 9-11 style of airplane strike. The Holtec design provides insufficient protection as well, but at least is a far better design for protection against smaller aircraft impacts. However, it is a worse design from the perspective of an aviation fuel fire, because the fuel will fall into the vent holes (which all cement overpacks must have to release heat) and be able to burn for a long time around the casks. Similarly, the proposed WCS facility will only be very gently sloped, which is insufficient to provide fast run-off for jet fuel.

Additionally, like the Oroville Dam problem currently unfolding in northern California, which had been assessed more than a decade ago but nothing was done, the infrastructure on which the nuclear waste will be transported is woefully lacking in proper maintenance, and every bridge the waste goes over or under is in danger of collapsing.

The bottom line still that these proposals remain technically insufficient, they would be illegal under current law, they will be paid for with money absconded from funding set aside for a permanent repository, they will provide nuclear utilities with a free gift at taxpayer and citizen's expense, they will require overruling the concerns of citizens around the sites and along the transportation routes, and worst of all, they will provide a way for the continued production of nuclear waste at approximately 100 operating nuclear power plants, without any proper way to store the waste.

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