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From: "Judy Hogan" <judyhogan@mindspring.com>
To: "David Price" <david.price@mail.house.gov>
Date: Fri, Dec 17, 1999 10:26 AM
Subject: Recent NRC Public Comment Sessions & Nuclear Waste into Household Items

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PO Box 253
 Moncure, N.C. 27559-0253
 <judyhogan@mindspring.com>
 December 17, 1999

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 (64FR35090)

ADJ

Representative David Price
 U.S. Congress
 1777 Fordham Ave.
 Suite 202
 Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514

Dear Representative Price:

I received your letter of December 9 just after the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's sessions for public comment in Raleigh and Chapel Hill on December 7 and 8. I attended both afternoon sessions, and I thought that the speakers who had concerns about the safety of the CP & L proposal to double the spent fuel rod storage at Shearon Harris spoke quite effectively. If the Nuclear Regulatory Commission doesn't *listen* to this concern, it will speak very badly for the NRC and the U.S. Government. How sad that CP & L has set itself up to be an adversary of the public good. We depend on our government to make sure they don't get away with this.

I did talk with two of the independent judges sitting on this panel of three men from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. They were quite happy to speak with us informally in the breaks. Two of them assured us that they were listening carefully and that they cared *only about safety.*

You are probably aware that there has been yet another incident at the Harris plant, which triggered a shutdown of the reactor only a few days ago. This is the fifth in a few months. I am also anxious about the bringing in even now of spent fuel rods from CP & L's other plants down a train track that goes along Old Highway #1, right through Moncure and past many farms, homes, schools, etc., and is only about a mile from my house. I understand from someone who knows about this that these rods, even encased, are giving off radiation. Several speakers emphasized how unsafe all this transporting was. One man quoted a scientist having said that these spent fuel rods should be kept at the generating reactors for at least 50 years. Clearly, this advice is not being followed.

A friend of mine who works at the Environmental Protection Agency pointed out to me that there is a big difference between a nuclear engineer and a nuclear scientist. The engineer doesn't have nearly the understanding that the scientist does. We all count on the NRC to make sure that the two scientists, David Lochbaum and Gordon Thompson, will be allowed by the NRC to give their testimony. It was the delay of this testimony, not the public sessions being seemingly discounted per se, that is the real concern of us who are working to ensure safety at Shearon Harris.

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DSIO

Thank you for all that you are doing on this issue. I have just learned that the NRC, with the nuclear industry and the U.S. Department of Energy, is also planning to turn nuclear waste into household items, and I forward the information. Surely, this is wrong! I will be writing to the NRC about this, and I hope you will do what you can here, too. You and I don't always agree, e.g., on the appropriate action in Kosovo, but I know you try very hard to pay attention to your constituents, and I do appreciate you as a Congressperson. Congress is, I would think, the main control on NRC, and obviously they need close monitoring.

Sincerely,

Judy Hogan
919-545-9932

Encl: Newest Incident at Shearon Harris, Turning Nuclear Waste into Household Items [Attachments]

cc: Senator John Edwards
Mr. William Cavanaugh c/o Mr. John Caves, CP & L
Judge G. Paul Bollwerk, III, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
Nuclear Regulatory Chairman Richard Meserve
Mr. Jim Warren, N.C. WARN
Governor Jim Hunt
Senator Eleanor Kinnaid
Chatham County Commissioner Gary Phillips

CC: "NRC Chairman Richard Meserve" <secy@nrc.gov>, "N ...

From: NC WARN <NC-WARN@pobox.com>
To: WARN <nc-warn@pobox.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 15, 1999 2:48 PM
Subject: Emergency Harris Shutdown

The following story appeared on page 3 of the Business section of today's Raleigh News & Observer.

Shearon Harris reactor shut down

An electrical problem caused the plant's third unplanned shutdown this year.*

By KARIN SCHILL, Staff Writer

NEW HILL -- Workers at the Shearon Harris nuclear plant halted reactor operations early Tuesday after an electrical problem caused a pump failure. The unplanned shutdown was the third this year at the power station. Repairs got under way immediately, and the reactor was expected to be back on line early today, said Jeanne Bonds, a spokeswoman for the plant in southwestern Wake County.

"This isn't anything associated with the reactor. The problem was with the steam generation in the turbine," she said. "It was a ground-fault problem in the electrical system. It's an electrical part that could have been at any plant, not just a nuclear plant."

In January, two technicians accidentally cut the power to two of the reactor's three coolant pumps, causing the reactor to automatically shut down. Two months later, the plant was down again after the water in a steam generator unexpectedly started to rise and automatic safety systems again killed the nuclear chain reaction inside the reactor.

That snag came within days of a steam generator snag that forced Shearon Harris to reduce power.* Three unplanned outages and a near-outage are unusual for a plant that has had a record of operating well. Each time a reactor trips, CP&L stands to lose revenue, depending on electricity demand at the time.

"Our goal is to have no reactor trips, obviously, but this is also a reflection of the

fact that the plant's safety systems work as they're supposed to," CP&L spokesman Mike Hughes said.

The Shearon Harris plant, which is owned by CP&L and the N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency, has produced electricity since 1987.

* Note from NC WARN: The "power reduction" was an emergency reduction to 3% power after the failure of 2 steam generator valves on consecutive days, a serious problem. It was, in essence, a fourth shutdown.

Short letters can be sent to the N&O at forum@nando.com. Please let them hear from you.

--

NC WARN)))

North Carolina Waste Awareness & Reduction Network
P.O. BOX 61051
Durham, NC 27715-1051
Phone: (919) 490-0747
Fax: (919) 493-6614
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We must stop the accumulation of poisons in our environment.

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From: NC WARN <NC-WARN@pobox.com>
To: WARN <nc-warn@pobox.com>
Date: Thu, Dec 16, 1999 12:56 PM
Subject: Radioactive Cookware?

URGENT ACTION:

TURNING NUCLEAR WASTE INTO HOUSEHOLD ITEMS ??

A large scale radioactive "recycling" program that would turn RADIOACTIVE WASTE into HOUSEHOLD ITEMS is being planned by the folks at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), in conjunction with the nuclear industry and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

By turning radioactive metal into common household items, the nuclear industry would save billions of dollars by reusing metals that were once part of nuclear power plants, weapons factories and weapons themselves. Additionally, the DOE would save money by escaping the responsibility of cleaning up the huge mess DOE and the nuclear industry have made at the nation's weapons plants.

Some of the radioactive items would include:

- Cookware and eating utensils
- Eyeglass frames
- Zippers
- Computer batteries
- Jewelry
- Food and cans & containers
- Braces for teeth
- Anything made with metal

What is the real cost?

Unfortunately, the release of these metals would cause increased exposures to radioactivity to the extent that direct contact with the household items, along with the effects from increased overall background radiation, would cause an estimated 92,755 additional cancer deaths in the U.S., according to the NRC.

What you can do:

1) PUBLIC COMMENTS NEEDED BY DECEMBER 22, 1999

The NRC is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to consider all potential impacts and options. Here is your chance to tell the NRC how much radiation you are willing to receive so that others can save money.

(For more information: 64 Federal Register 35090 June 30, 1999 ;
www.citizen.org/cmep/; www.nirs.org)

Mail letters to
NRC Chairman Richard Meserve

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555
Attn: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff

or submit through the internet, at <http://ruleform.llnl.gov/Email.html>.
or E-mail directly to: secy@nrc.gov

2) Ask the media why they haven't covered this issue.

Some key points you might include in your statement:

We do not want nuclear power and weapons wastes "released," "cleared," "deregulated," "exempted," "generally licensed," designated "de minimis," "unimportant" or BRC -- below regulatory concern -- or by any other means allowed out of nuclear facilities and into the marketplace or the environment, at any level.

Once these radioactive wastes enter the recycling stream, recovering or controlling them will be outside the ability of anyone, citizens, government or industry.

No matter what level the NRC sets for allowable radiation risk, dose or concentration, it will be difficult or impossible to measure, verify and enforce.

Using radioactive wastes in consumer products poses unnecessary, avoidable, involuntary, uninformed risks. The consumer, the producers and the raw materials industries don't want these radioactive wastes or risks.

The NRC should also extend the comment period to at least September 2000. This issue is too important to act hastily upon and it should be fully debated by the public.

We fully support the complete opposition and "zero tolerance" policies of the metal and recycling industries, the management and the unions. We appreciate their efforts, not only in opposition to legalization of radioactive releases, but in their investment in detection equipment and literally holding the line against the radioactive threat to the public.

The fact that radioactive waste is already getting out into the environment should not be used to justify legal levels allowing more releases. The NRC, EPA and DOE should prevent future releases and try to correct past releases. The United States should take the lead in preventing the contamination of the international marketplace.

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NC WARN)))

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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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From: "Judy Hogan" <judyhogan@mindspring.com>
To: "John Edwards" <senator@edwards.senate.gov>
Date: Fri, Dec 17, 1999 10:36 AM
Subject: Recent NRC Public Comment Sessions & Nuclear waste into Household items

PO Box 253
Moncure, N.C. 27559-0253
December 17, 1999

Dear Senator Edwards,

Thanks you for your letter of November 19. I was indeed able to speak at the "limited appearance" session in Chapel Hill on December 8, and I also attended the afternoon session December 7 in Raleigh. I thought the NRC Judges were very considerate to those of us who are very worried about the CP & L plan to double spent fuel storage at Shearon Harris. They gave everyone enough time, and they seemed very responsive. The real test will be their decision, which we hope will be as concerned for safety as they expressed themselves as being.

I have just e-mailed you my longer letter to Representative Price, with attachments. I hope you can have some effect on ensuring that the NRC works well and that it does not proceed with its plan to turn nuclear waste into household items! This is of very serious concern and very thoughtless, indeed. One wonders what they think of the ordinary American citizens whose lives will be affected. This would cause, even by the NRC's own reckoning, an additional 92,755 cancer deaths! Who thinks like this???

I appreciated getting your speeches to make sure that NC flood victims get what they need in a timely manner. Can you imagine the problems if we had a serious accident at Shearon Harris, making our whole Triangle area unlivable? Please do all you can to prevent this!

Sincerely,

Judy Hogan
919-545-9932

CC: "NRC Chairman Richard Meserve" <secy@nrc.gov>, "N ...