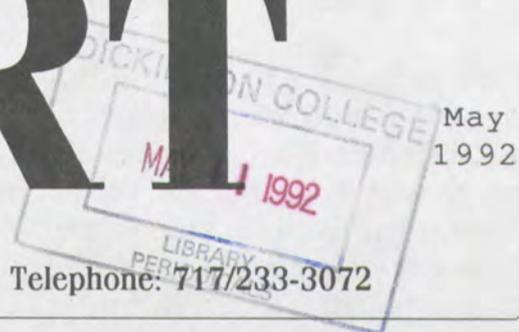


THREE MILE ISLAND

ALERT

315 Peffer Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-1834

Telephone: 717/233-3072



Chronic Safety Problems Continue at U.S. Nuclear Plants

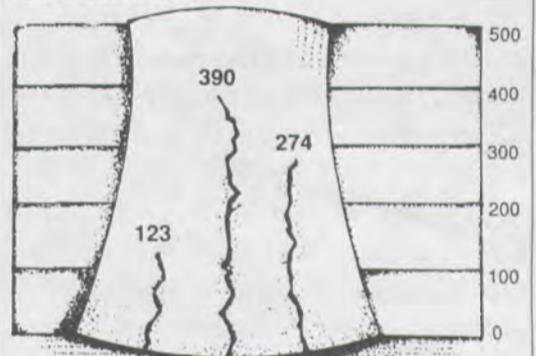
More than 787 chronic safety problems remain at the nation's 111 licensed nuclear power plants, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Many of these problems are more than ten years old, dating back to the 1979 TMI accident.

"Utilities claim that because these problems have been around so long, they are not really a safety hazard," said Martin Gelfand, research director of the Safe Energy Communications Council (SECC). "But each of these problems erodes the overall safety of a reactor. Waiting for a pipe to burst, a valve to jam, or a black-out in the control room before fixing these problems is like playing with fire."

Gelfand is a co-author of *MYTHBusters #7: Nuclear Reactor Safety*, a document which reports that aging reactors, the degradation of safety systems, lax regulation enforcement, and poor management by utilities all lead to decreasing safety margins at U.S. plants. It also finds that the new generation of nuclear plants being planned will not eliminate the existing safety problems and may, in fact, create new ones. Further, the report contends a Chernobyl-like accident could happen—and is likely to occur—in the U.S. in the next 20 years. For information on obtaining a copy of *MYTHBusters #7*, call SECC at 202/483-8491.

Chronic Safety Problems

Congress is pushing to further restrict public safety hearings for nuclear plant licensing. But the nation's 111 licensed reactors continue to operate with 787 Unresolved, Generic and Three Mile Island safety problems, many more than a decade old.



Unimplemented Safety Issues at U.S. Nuclear Plants

Source: Nuclear Regulatory Commission
© Safe Energy Communication Council

Petition to Block Waste Dump Siting in Pa. Enclosed

A petition to block the siting of a "low-level" radioactive waste dump in Pennsylvania and calling for the reduction of nuclear waste production is included as the last page of this **Alert**. Please collect signatures and return the completed petition to the Pennsylvania Environmental Network.

Chem Nuclear, the Waste Management subsidiary designated a Pennsylvania's "disposer" of choice, has been accused of using criteria such as skin color, poverty, wealth, and prior environmental opposition in its search for a "low-level" waste site in North Carolina. Chris Fullerton, a North Carolina activist, said, "The only real solution to the problem of nuclear waste is to stop producing

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it...Through its actions in North Carolina, Chem-Nuclear stated that some kinds of people are more 'expendable' than others. That's a message that just can't be tolerated."

If readers are wondering why the term "low-level" is always enclosed by quotation marks, it is because it is one of the most misleading terms ever coined. In the U.S., this term covers all nuclear waste that is not legally "high-level" waste, some transuranic waste (material contaminated with radioactive elements heavier than uranium, such as plutonium), and mill tailings. So "low-level" includes irradiated reactor hardware and pipes, control rods, the filters and evaporator parts from nuclear plants, and, once they're dismantled, entire nuclear power plants. This includes, for example, from a typical 1,000 megawatt nuclear reactor building floor, more than 13,000 tons of contaminated concrete and more than 1,400 tons of contaminated steel reinforcing bar.

So, please sign the petition, circulate the petition (take it to work, school, church, aerobics class, or your union meeting) and return it to PEN.

House Interior Committee Approves National Energy Strategy Bill; Stage Set for Floor Confrontation - Your Voice Should be Heard

Under the leadership of Chairman George Miller (D-California), the House Interior Committee passed a wide-ranging national energy strategy bill that in many respects is the virtual opposite of its Bush-Sununu counterpart passed by the Senate. Pennsylvania Democrat Peter Kostmayer played a major role in shaping the bill, which is now under attack by the nuclear and fossil fuel interests.

To pass this bill (H.R. 776) will require unprecedented effort by the grassroots environmental movement. Readers are urged to write their Congressmen and voice support for specific provisions of the bill. Among other things, the bill:

- +Limits reactor license renewals to 20 years and allows hearings on whether a reactor meets its "current licensing basis;"
- +Ensures judicial review of petitions challenging the adequacy of reactor operations after a reactor has been licensed;
- +Revokes the 1986 and 1990 Below Regulatory Concern (BRC) policies and ensures state authority to regulate "low-level" radioactive waste;
- +Requires the Environmental Protection Agency (rather than the NRC) to establish standards for the clean-up of contaminated sites;
- +Does not include the "Screw Nevada" provision that would remove Nevada's (and every state's) right to apply state environmental laws to radioactive waste dump siting; and,
- +The bill provides additional protection for whistleblowers and generally prohibits offshore oil drilling on the west coast and most of the east coast until at least 2002.

Address your correspondence to: The Honorable _____, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Two Polls Show Public Opposition to One-Step Licensing

A SECC poll conducted in mid-March shows that 79 percent of Americans opposes one-step nuclear licensing and 81 percent oppose federal pre-emption of state laws for radioactive waste dump siting. Similarly, a poll conducted by George Bush's pollster, Fred Steeper, found only 18 percent of Ameri-

Please renew your membership, then give more to support TMIA activities

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ ZIP _____

Intervention Fund Contribution: \$10 \$20 \$50 \$100 MORE (Checks in the amount of \$50 or more can be made payable to the TMI Legal Fund for tax deduction purposes.)

Membership: _____ \$15 Regular Members _____ \$50 Sustaining Membership
 _____ \$25 Non-Profit Organization _____ \$100 Patron
 _____ \$5 Low Income/Student _____ \$200 Club Member
 _____ \$5 Non-member newsletter subscription

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO TMIA, 315 Peffer Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102

cans believe one-step licensing would help America get the energy we need, help our economy, and help our environment.

EPA Says U.S. May Have 45,300 Radioactively Contaminated Sites

In the first major survey of its kind, the Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that there are more than 45,300 sites in the U.S. that may be radioactively contaminated. The Department of Energy, in an attempt to downplay the findings, noted the EPA study counted each contaminated area within one site separately. They noted EPA found 1500 contaminated sites at the DoE's Hanford nuclear reservation.

25,000 of the sites were designated as commercial, and 10,000 of those were listed as "manufacturing" sites. Nearly 6,000 of the sites are hospitals and other medical facilities.

TMIA Takes Part in Earth Day

TMIA had an information table at the April 25 Earth Day celebration on Harrisburg's City Island. One of the pamphlets distributed was provided by the National Audubon Society and urged recipients to join the "Solar Brigade" and help send a message that we want 10 percent of our electricity solar generated by the year 2002. The flyer notes this would eliminate up to 170 million tons of carbon dioxide each year and help spare the Earth from the worst effects of global warming. Included in the Audubon flyer were tags to be included with your payment to your electric utility notifying them of your desire for solar generated power. Call TMIA for a copy of the brochure: 233-7897.

Evaporator Fails, Evaporation on Hold

GPU officials reported to the TMI Advisory Panel on April 16 that the TMI-2 water evaporator has failed. The evaporator is currently being redesigned and has been out of operation for several months. It will take them until late May or early June to get back to evaporating the more than 1 million gallons of radioactive water still stored on the Island.

Chernobyl Victims in U.S. to Visit U.N.

Thanks in part to an invitation issued by TMIA, two Ukrainian victims of the Chernobyl accident, Valery Kosenko and Vitaly Mel'nichuk are in the U.S. until May 10 to convey to U.N. officials the urgent needs of Chernobyl victims.

A note on Chernobyl: April 26, 1992 marked the sixth anniversary of the Chernobyl accident. In commemoration, a New England safe energy group published a map showing what would be the effect (and it isn't that far-fetched an idea considering the technology in place) if the Connecticut Millstone reactor had a similar accident. Three-quarters of Pennsylvania would be within the 350 mile radius, where, six years later, a ban is still in place on the consumption of deer meat and wild berries. The entire state is well within the 630 mile radius where there are bans on all dairy products, fresh vegetables and meat.

Jane Perkins Named President of Friends of the Earth

Jane Perkins, a former member of Harrisburg City Council and a long-time safe energy activist, has been named president of Washington, D.C.-based Friends of the Earth. Jane, a longtime friend of TMIA (you might recall her shepherding resolutions through City Council and her outstanding work in putting together the Labor March against TMI), describes FoE as "probably to the left of the Sierra Club but to the right of Green Peace." The group merged with the Environmental Policy Institute and the Oceanic Society about two years ago and is active on virtually every front in the battle for a better environment. For membership information, write FoE at 218 D Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003 or call 202/544-2600.

News Notes: TMIA's Annual Picnic will be held Sunday, July 19, from 1 to 9PM at Camp Riley ...Thanks to all who helped with the TMIA 15th anniversary party. Special guest Joanne Doroshow drove in from New York City and Alan Hetrick of Warm Springs Lodge supplied the delicious breads and salads...The following TMIA members were elected to serve on TMIA's Planning Council: Eric Epstein, Vera Stuchinski, Bill Cologie, Cherie Friedrich, Kay Pickering, Betsy Robinson, Deborah Baker...Those with a red X - Please renew your membership immediately!...



PEN

Pennsylvania Environmental Network

R.D. #1, Box 420

Houtzdale, PA 16651

814/378-5088

Chem Nuclear Systems, Inc. a subsidiary of Waste Management, Inc. is currently seeking a "low-level" radioactive waste dump site in Pennsylvania for unknown quantities of radioactive materials and wastes. This dump will encourage further production of more waste. If no facility is operating by 1996, each State is required by Federal law to take title to, liability for, and possession of the "low-level" waste generated within its borders, at taxpayers' expense.

WHEREAS: any exposure to ionizing radiation is capable of damaging health and safety of people and the environment;

WHEREAS: all nuclear waste disposal technology is experimental and has not been demonstrated to be able to successfully isolate radioactive wastes from the biosystem for the full hazardous life of the waste;

WHEREAS: the total volume, radioactivity, and biological hazard of these wastes are unknown to the four Appalachian Compact States (PA, MD, WV, DE) that are legally responsible for their disposal; and,

WHEREAS: Pennsylvania is required by Federal laws to "dispose" of all "low-level" radioactive waste generated in the Appalachian Compact States;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: We, the undersigned, call upon the State Legislature and Governor immediately to take all legally binding legislative and administrative measures to curtail and minimize the generation of additional quantities of radioactive waste; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER THAT: Before any siting process goes forward, studies be conducted by research consultants, who are fully independent of any affiliations with those who produce and manage radioactive waste, in order to determine all potential sources and the long-term total volumes, radioactive concentrations, and biological hazards of "low-level" radioactive waste in the Appalachian Compact States.

This draft petition was initiated by concerned citizens. Date: _____

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____