

To the NRC:

From the NRC website: "Congress charged the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) with protecting people and the environment from unnecessary exposure to radiation as a result of civilian uses of nuclear materials."

To protect the people and environment of southern Vermont, western Massachusetts, and the Connecticut River Valley, require Entergy to begin the dismantling and decontamination process of removing the Strontium-90 contaminated soil at VYNPS.

At the NRC public meeting on February 19th, Arnie Gundersen clearly stated that the consequences of delaying the removal of contaminated soil are continued migration of the Strontium-90 into the soil and groundwater, harming more of our environment and our health.

In the past, the NRC has been lenient with Entergy, which concealed various problems and was ignorant of others. The NRC should live up to its mandate and it should reexamine its standards. It routinely allows exemptions from regulations that would protect the environment in order to help reduce costs for the nuclear industry. At VYNPS the NRC allowed exemptions from using the cooling towers because of the extra costs to Entergy—at the expense of wildlife in the Connecticut River. And given that the Federal Government has heavily subsidized the nuclear industry, assumed responsibility for long-term storage of spent nuclear fuel, and is the major insurer if any nuclear disaster occurs, surely the NRC could provide no-interest loans to Entergy to accomplish the dismantling and decommissioning of VYNPS in a timely manner and not wait fifty years to begin the process of removing contaminated soil. Protect the environment and the people, not the industry.

The NRC should also reassess its thinking about spent-nuclear fuel. The fuel pools are vulnerable, as was clearly demonstrated at Fukushima Daiichi. The NRC has so far allowed the nuclear industry to pack their fuel pools in order to delay the costs of dry cask storage. There are many spent-nuclear fuel pools across this country and all of them are vulnerable to nature's fury and to human error and maliciousness. For the next year of hot fuel wet management at VYNPS, the full EPZ should remain in effect. And, the NRC should implement a policy requiring all nuclear power plants to move their spent-nuclear fuel into dry cask storage expeditiously. The safety of the casks, both short term and long term, is important for our health and our environment. Certainly, the bank of the Connecticut River is not a good location for radioactive waste.

The old saying, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is exponentially true regarding nuclear fuel. Prevent a nuclear disaster. Be cautious. Be a good steward of the health of our people and our environment, of our earth for future generations.

The Shut It Down Affinity Group

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