### The Wercury

A8 / Friday, December 22, 2006



### READERS' E S

### Focus on deadly waste at Limerick

If Limerick Nuclear Power Plant has an accident involving its high level radioactive wastes or if it were breached through terrorist attack, the health, environment and economic consequences could be catastrophic. Our focus should be on addressing immediate and long-term threats from this deadly waste at Limerick, in the safest, most precautionary and most hardened on-site storage possible.

Exelon is likely to choose the cheapest options, not the safest, unless required by law to improve safety measures. Exelon's failure to supply back-up power for warning sirens and failure to protect against air strikes or missile attacks by terrorists shows their disregard for public health and safety.

NRC cannot be relied upon to do the right thing either. NRC decisions and policies protect the financial interests of the nuclear industry, not public health and safety. The only way that will change is if our federal officials require NRC to protect our interests.

There's no safe solution for storing Limerick's deadly waste. We don't believe Yucca Mountain will, or should, ever open. Centralized interim

storage in Pennsylvania would increase transport risks to public health, safety, and security. Every time Limerick's deadly waste is moved our risk of a catastrophe increases. Comparing Limerick's fuel pools to above ground storage is a false argument. We can expect to always live with both.

However, there is something you can do to attempt to reduce our risk of a Limerick disaster.

Contact your U.S. Senators and Congressmen today. Ask them to support the "Principles for Safeguarding Nuclear Waste at Reactors," developed by national public interest groups.

If implemented, these principles would dramatically increase the safety of high-level radioactive wastes stored at Limerick Nuclear Power Plant and others.

DR. LEWIS CUTHBERT ACE President

### The Mercury

A8 / Saturday, December 16, 2006

### ANOTHER ...

### The danger of storing nuclear waste

This summer, Limerick Township Supervisors voted to allow Exelon Nuclear to build an outdoor concrete pad so it could move radioactive waste from nearly-full indoor pools to outdoor casks at the Limerick plant. The vote was unanimous, overturning the Township Planning Commission. The mood of the supervisors was casual. Chairman David Kane said voting "no" wasn't an option believing a court would later reverse the decision.

The Democratic victory in November means Harry Reid is now the powerful Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate. Reid is from Nevada, the home of Yucca Mountain, designated to become a permanent repository for nuclear waste. Reid,

a long time opponent of the Yucca project, declares it "dead right now," meaning nuclear plants like Limerick are stuck with nuclear waste indefinitely.

Guest columnist

Kane told The Mercury that storing waste at plants like Limerick is a "terrible solution." But he and the other supervisors were deluding themselves this summer if they assumed that Yucca would open any time soon.

Nuclear reactors that made atomic bombs began operating in 1943, and reactors that produce electricity started in 1957. But it wasn't until 1982, when Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, that any effort was made to find a site for permanently housing the waste. Without the law, each plant just stored the waste it produced.

After the law was enacted, it took another 20 years for the U.S. Energy Department to examine several possible locations and choose Yucca as the designated site. But long before the November vote and Reid's ascension to power, the Yucca plan was in big trouble. The plan is mired in a variety of legal challenges, and even the most optimistic projection is that it won't be ready until 2018. But the surer bet is that it will never open.

About 77,000 tons of radioactive waste—nearly 1,000 of them at Limerick—is stored at dozens of U.S. nuclear plants. That staggering total equals hundreds of Chernobyls and thousands of Hiroshima bombs. The waste is actually a deadly combination of chemicals produced only when an atomic bomb explodes or a nuclear reactor operates. If these chemicals are ejected into the air, they enter the body and cause cancer, birth defects, and other radiation-related illnesses.

One such chemical is Strontium-90. In the 1960s, mothers protesting atomic bomb tests

(ironically, close to the Yucca site) held signs such as "Please No More Strontium-90," an admission this was one of the more dangerous radioactive chemicals.

The treaty signed by President John F. Kennedy banned above-ground tests. Another chemical is Plutonium-239, which decays very slowly, and will not completely be gone for 240,000 years. So the plan to store waste must be 100 percent foolproof — meaning absolutely no chance that waste will ever escape — for this length of time, or disaster will ensue.

Yucca Mountain is a desolate area about 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas. The Energy Department concluded there was virtually no way to disturb the deadly chemical soup stored far underground. But water seeping through fissures into the site and frequent earthquakes make Yucca unsuitable for waste storage. Moreover, the potential of a terrorist attack makes any site unsuitable.

Opening Yucca would also require that waste would be shipped across the country by trucks, trains, and sometimes barges. Thousands of trips would be made, many through large population centers. The cargo on each trip would be the deadly stew of radioactivity, with 40 to 200 times the radioactivity of the Hiroshima bomb. Any successful terrorist attack or accident would be absolutely disastrous. The term applied to each shipment is "Mobile Chernobyl."

The federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved, or rather rubber-stamped, all 36 applications from companies like Exelon to take the waste from the overloaded pools and move it to outside casks. Limerick Supervisor Renee Chesler commented that citizens can go to elected officials if they have concerns. But Chesler, like Kane, deliberately ignored the realities of nuclear politics.

Kane, Chesler, and the other Limerick supervisors are savvy enough to know that Yucca was going nowhere. They knew there was no solution to the waste problem 50 years ago when nuclear reactors began operating, and there is no solution now. They had the chance this summer to stop Exelon from adding more waste to the already huge amount, but chose to hide their heads in the sand. And with their blessing, Limerick has now been made into a dump for the most dangerous stuff on earth; for the foreseeable future and maybe forever, threatening us, our children, and future generations.

Joseph Mangano is national coordinator of the Radiation and Public Health Project, a research and education group based in New York.

### The Mercury

A4 / Wednesday, November 29, 2006 н



### OUR TE

### Permanent solution still lacking for nuke fuel rods storage

In many other industries, the difficult environmental questions center on how to safely dispose of raw materials used in a plant or process.

But when it comes to generating nuclear energy, disposal is out of the question. The highly radioactive byproducts of nuclear energy — the spent fuel rods instead have to be "stored" indefinitely. This begs an entirely different set of questions and dangerous scenarios.

At Exelon Nuclear's Limerick Generating Station, the storage of spent fuel rods has demanded some attention and recent action, as the 20-year-old plant's accumulated spent fuel is exceeding the initial storage location. As a replacement, Limerick Township Board of Supervisors in July approved land development plans for the Exelon plant to install a concrete pad on which its own dry cask storage facility will be erected.

During meetings on those subjects, officials with Exelon and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission insisted the dry casks would only be needed for temporary storage and that the fuel would eventually be moved to Yucca Mountain, a federal disposal site proposed in Nevada.

However, with the November takeover of Congress by the Democrats, opponents of the federal government's planned spent nuclear fuel storage facility beneath Nevada's Yucca Mountain gained a powerful new ally. Harry Reid, the new Senate Majority Leader from Nevada, told reporters in his home state last week that the much-delayed, over-budget project is "dead right now."

Originally targeted for opening in 1998, the Energy Department now says the best case scenario for the opening of the Yucca Mountain facility is 2017.

It is intended to hold 77,000 tons of the radioactive spent fuel left over after it has been used to boil water in the nation's nuclear reactors. About 50,000 tons of that fuel is now stored in dry casks at 65 power plants, including Limerick's, in 31 states, according to the Associated Press. Reid said that keeping the fuel in dry cask storage at the nation's nuclear power plants will keep it safe for 100 years.

Others are not so sure.

Edward F. Sproat, director of the Energy Department's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, told The Associated Press that leaving the fuel stored at the plants is just "pushing the solution off to future generations." Limerick supervisors' Chairman David Kane called the idea of leaving the fuel at individual power plants "a terrible solution."

Beth Rapczynski, a spokeswoman for Exelon, said, "It's important to keep in mind that the federal government has an obligation under the law to build a central repository for used nuclear fuel, which was mandated by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1983. "Since then, consumers of nuclear-generated electricity have paid more than \$25 billion into the Nuclear Waste Fund for that purpose, Rapczynski said.

While everyone passes the buck on how to best store the spent fuel, the residents of the tri-county area surrounding the Limerick plant live each day with the material in our midst. The latest wrinkle that makes Yucca Mountain even more remote as a possibility underscores the importance of making "temporary" storage at Limerick as safe as it can be.

After all, it may not be temporary, and the area's

future safety may be at stake.





For Home Delivery, call 610 • 970 • 4500

day, November 28, 2006

# Norago of spent nuclear fuel rods at linerick plant could become permanent

By Evan Brandt

erick Generating Station, could me perimanent, at least as far as new Democratic leader of the U.S. ge of highly radioactive spent ear fuel rods at Exelon Nuclear's MERICK – The "temporary" ebràndt@pottsmerc.com

Senate is concerned.

planned spent nuclear fuel storage. facility beneath Nevada's Yucca. With the November takeover of neuts of the federal government's Harry Reid, the new Senate Majority Congress by the Democrats, oppo-Mountain gained a powerful new ally.

Leadet, hails from Nevada and told reporters in his home state last week

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the radioactive spent fuel left over after-It is intended to hold 77,000 tons of 50,000 tons of that fuel is now stored nation's nuclear reactors. About it has been used to boil water in the in dry casks at 65 power plants in 31

opment plans for the Exelon plant to install a concrete pad on which its own Supervisors approved the land devel-One of those plants is in Limerick. In July, Limerick's Board of Press.

(See FUEL ROD STORAGE on A6)

### NATION/STATE

# ump faces new roadblocks in Democratic Congress

Associated Press Writer By Erica Werner

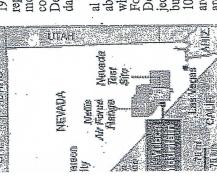
When igress targeted Nevada as the and, the state didn't have the on's nuclear waste dumping wenty years later, the most tical power to say no. ASHINGTON -

ent foe of the Yucca untain nuclear waste dump about to become Senate jority leader. Nevada nocratic Sen Harry Reid's v job, which gives him conover what legislation reachhe Senate floor, could deal a

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off utilities' hands starting in

crippling blow to the already stumbling project.

nome-state reporters to declare Among Reid's first acts after this month's election was to Yucca Mountain "dead right convene a conference call with ".wou

when I came (to the Senate) in "It sure is different now than 1986," the senator observed.

plants in 31 states. Reid would west of Las Vegas is planned as plants reactors and defense sites sands of years. About 50,000 ons of the waste is now stored in temporary sites at 65 power The dump 90 miles norththe first national repository for to hold 77,000 tons of the mateial - from commercial power across the nation - for thouradioactive waste. It's supposed leave all of it in place.

Originally targeted to open in 1998, Yucca Mountain has been noney shortfalls and scientific The Energy Department's best-case opening epeatedly set back by lawsuits, date is now 2017. controversies,

about \$9 billion, \$6.5 billion of Department estimated the proect would cost \$58 billion to build and operate for the first 00 years, New cost projections are being worked up, and they are expected to total more than al storage site has already cost our years ago, the Energy The effort to create a nationwhich has been spent on Yucca. \$70 billion.

HOE: Dapaning of Energy

million in recent years "will be cut back significantly, that will be for sure," he vowed. the dump that has ranged between \$450 million and \$550 floor under his leadership, funding for the project also will dry up quickly. Annual spending on Mountain reach the Senate The department proposed neant to fix problems with the legislation earlier this year bility to taxpayers because the obligated to take nuclear waste dump, which is a mounting liagovernment was contractually

Reid said he couldn't singleby President Bush. But he added: handedly kill the dump outright, vote of Congress and approval something that would require "There's not much to kill." and around the dump site - is sials say at least one legislative needed before construction can 998. Energy Department offichange - formally withdrawing

The project also is losing some of its most persistent supwill no bill to help Yucca Reid, however, pledged after the Nov, 7 election that not only

corters as Republicans relincials as more open to their view-Committee N.M., has been a vocal advocate for years; he'll be replaced by Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., who supports Yucca Mountain quish control of Congress. Chairman Pete Domenici, Rbut is viewed by Nevada offi-Senate Energy soints.

she was minority whip. Administration and industry and Public Works Committee with authority over some aspects of the project, is a vocal Speaker House vote four years ago, when who will chair the Environment Yucca Mountain opponent. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., worked unsuccessfully to corral opposition to the project in a crucial Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., House Incoming

About 1,500 people in Nevada the guard on Capitol, Hill won't be the death knell for the project. officials insist the changing of are now employed there.

Yucca Mountain also has ured research grants to the University of Nevada, and even Reid aides say some spending should be maintained.

"I don't think the program's gone off the edge by any means," said David Blee, execuportation. "It'll be more complicated and take a more creative approach, and more of an tive director the U.S. Transport Council, an industry group that works on nuclear waste trans-

Washington) beltway."

Regulatory he Energy Department wants to do that in congressional action, though severe budget cuts would be an Supporters say they will now focus on submitting a required 2008 and it's not dependent on icense application to The Commission. mpediment. Nuclear

age casks at power plants will keep it safe for 100 years or more. To industry officials and the Energy Department, that's radioactive wastes in dry stor-Reid says putting the highly no answer.

Sproat, director of the depart-"Leaving everything where it em," said Edward F. "Ward" s, is not a solution to the probment's Office of Management. Radioactive

ing a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington in this file

Senate Minority Leader Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., left, is Joined by Sen. Richard Durbin, D-III., and Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., durphoto. Reid's new Job, which gives him control over what legisation reaches the Senate floor, could deal a crippling blow to

the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump.

what's been happening with this program up until now." project, Sproat said, "1s pushing he solution off to future generations, which is pretty much Failure to pursue the Yucca

Energy Department Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste State of Nevada Agency for www.state.nv.us/nucwaste/ Nuclear Projects: Management: On the Net:

www.ocrwm.doe.gov/ Sen, Harry Reld reid.senate.gov/



# Exelonsays no to extra monitors

By Evan Brandt ebrandt@pottsmerc.com

LIMERICK — Two months after Pottstown asked Exelon Nuclear to install additional heat and radiation monitoring for its proposed spent fuel storage facility, the borough has received Exelon's answer — no.

In a Nov. 16 response to the borough, plant manager Chris Mudrick wrote, "We agree with much of the report," but went on to say that the centrally controlled monitoring requested will not be installed. He was referring to a report from the Pottstown Environmental Advisory Commission that was adopted by the Borough Council on Sept. 11.

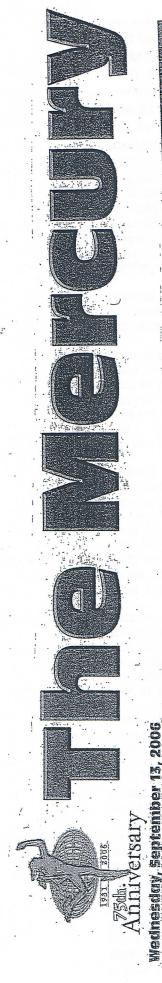
At the time of its adoption, the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, EAC Chairman Don Read pledged that the EAC would press Exelon on the subject of how the new project at the site would be protected from a terrorist attack. That conversation has not yet occurred and, as a result of Mudrick's response, may never occur.

Read said the EAC first wanted to make this monitoring request of Exelon as a trial balloon "to see how productive these discussions would actually be."

The central change the EAC asked for was "in-place detection devices with the information relayed to a central control center."

In Exelon's reply, Mudrick wrote that the company will use the same kind of "in-place" monitoring devices as it already has "placed

(See DETECTION DEVICES on A5)



# connental council to bush Exelon on nuclear plant securi

ebrandt@pottsmerc.com By Evan Brandt

POTTSTOWN - Speaking on the Monday to press Exelon Nuclear more closely about how it plans to prepare the defense of its latest project at the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, a borough official pledged Limerick plant against an attack by terrorists,

Advisory Commission, which ask-Pottstown On Monday night,

Exelon Nuclear to install additional . Noting that Exelon had asked in when it erects its dry cask storage system for its radioactive spent fuel rods.

tor building into steel and concrete: casks located on a concrete pad out-Fownship in July, will allow the excess side the generator building but within The project, approved by Limerick fuel rods now stored inside the genera-Exelon's defended perimeter.

Don Read, who is the chairman of Borough Council adopted the recom- the EAC, told council this is just the mendations of its Environmental first of a series of recommendations the group expects to make to Exelon.

asked for input on its controversial project, Read described the recommendaradiation and temperature monitoring March to meet with the EAC and tion for additional monitoring as a trial balloon

"We picked an easy issue to see how productive these discussions would actually be," Read told Borough Council Monday.

issues we would like to address," said "We have other, more complicated

standing here on the fifth anniversary "And I suppose it's ironic that we're Read.

of the terrorist attacks and I'm telling you we're going to ask Exelon whether the possibility of a terrorist attack has been considered in their plans," Read

- Elizabeth Rapczynski, director of after the meeting the spent fuel will be stored "within a secure area and the with all man-made and natural threats communications for the plant, said casks are designed and constructed

"I realize that attacks like those on Sept. 11 are hard to defend against, but (See NUCLEAR PLANT SECURITY on A7) in mind."

### Maker of fuel rod storage casks cited

NRC officials say manufacturer didn't measure thickness

> By Evan Brandt ebrandt@pottsmerc.com

LIMERICK — The maker of the casks that will hold spent fuel from the Limerick Nuclear Generating Station was cited last month for violating a manufacturing procedure.

During June inspections at two manufacturing locations in Japan, Kobe Steel Ltd. and Hitachi Zosen Mechanical Corp., inspectors for the Nuclear Regulatory Agency found a violation — the failure to adequately measure the thickness of casks being manufactured there.

The casks in question are not those destined for Limerick, said NRC spokesman Neil Sheehan. "They haven't even started working on the Limerick casks yet," he said.

The two Japanese manufacturers have been contracted by Columbia, Md. based Transnuclear Inc., a subsidiary of the French company Areva, to build the casks. Transnuclear holds the license from the NRC for its NUHOMS cask system, which is the one that will be used at Limerick.

Sheehan said the violation is a "level four violation," the lowest issued by the NRC. There are no fines involved as of yet.

In a July 10 letter to Transnuclear President and CEO Tara Neider, NRC official Robert J. Lewis wrote that the company must respond to the violation and the response would be used "to determine whether further enforcement action is necessary."

Neider said Friday the violation notice "had no impact on product quality."

She said other than the paperwork issue for which the violation was received, "the NRC lead auditor said

(See STORAGE CASKS on A3)



A8 / Saturday, July 29, 2006



### READERS' I I S

### Nuclear waste poses a danger

Limerick Nuclear Power Plant's high-level radioactive waste storage threatens the safety of every person reading this newspaper. As long as Limerick continues to operate, high-level radioactive waste (that can remain radioactive for hundreds of thousands of years) will keep piling up in our backyard. It will outlive any container storing it. Most of this deadly waste will remain here forever, leaving future generations with a lethal legacy.

Limerick's fuel pools already hold enough high level radioactive waste to create a disaster worse than Hiroshima. Above-ground cask storage is not instead of fuel pools at Limerick, it is in addition.

Fuel rods are far more radioactive after use. To call it "spent fuel" is deceptive. The only thing "spent" is our money as ratepayers and taxpayers, and our patience as concerned citizens subjected to this deadly threat by the nuclear industry and their regulators. Ten years after removal from the reactor, the radiation dose one meter away exceeds 10,000 REMS per hour. A dose of 5,000 REMS would be expected to cause immediate incapacitation and death within one week.

Still, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission failed to address concerns of a nuclear engineer about specific design flaws. The NRC appears more interested in protecting Exelon's interests than public health and safety. The NRC's lax oversight and enforcement of violations is alarming. There has been a dismal record of cask accidents and incidents in the brief 20 years casks were in use.

Deadly radioactive waste stored above ground creates another, possibly more inviting terrorist target at Limerick Nuclear Plant in the middle of this heavily populated region. Still the NRC refuses to address or improve security against missiles or air strikes even though army testing proved these casks can be penetrated with missiles. There's an airport within one mile of Limerick Nuclear Plant and another within five miles. Mothers For Peace won against the NRC in a California court concerning the NRC's fail-

ure to address terrorism and casks. We need and deserve the same scrutiny.

Unless required, Exelon won't improve security against missile and air strikes or upgrade the cask design. Unfortunately, the NRC is serving their corporate master and acting as a salesman rather than a regulator.

The NRC convinced the Limerick supervisors that they had no power to deceive the public about threats to health and safety. Sadly, permitting is splintered to such a degree that supervisors approved a cement slab to hold the most lethal waste known to mankind, without even knowing the thickness or how the fault line could impact it. Limerick supervisors are mandated by law to protect the health, safety, and welfare of local citizens. I believe they failed to do that when they treated Exelon's proposal like any other land use issue and ignored the fact that large amounts of high-level radioactive waste were being placed above ground, perhaps permanently.

Clearly, there won't be improved cask design or security without public involvement. Please take action today:

1. Contact Senators Specter and Santorum, and Congressmen Gerlach and Dent.

2. Ask for a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Limerick Nuclear Power Plant to include terrorism using current population and financial data.

3. Ask for a public hearing for all in the region, prior to Limerick's use of casks.

4. Contact Limerick supervisors and urge them to defer or reject any land use permits, at least until an EIS is completed and a public hearing is held.

DONNA CUTHBERT Pottstown

SJ th Jersey Edition

philly recom

## nuclear waste raise tears imerick's plans to store

Steel canisters containing spent fuel would be placed inside concrete vaults that sit out in the open.

By Sandy Bauers INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

ar power plant - past concrete barriers, razor wire, armed metal - bluish water undulates gently in two deep pools, stirred Deep inside the Limerick nucleand detectors for explosives and guards, four-inch-thick steel doors, by pumps.

ods, from Limerick's 20 years of face sit 5,000 bundles of spent fuel More than 20 feet below the sur-

operation,

And now, the pools are expected to be full in three years. So Limerick intends to transfer.

some of the spent fuel - highly adjoactive for thousands of years - into steel containers that will be out in concrete vaults sitting in the pen on the property.

ne community. They fear that a The plan has alarmed many in errorist attack could rupture a cask and release radiation. They worry hat the site will become a permanent nuclear waste dump.

spent fuel a half-century after the first large-scale plant began operative Large-scale plant began operative. dustry still lacks a good solution to Critics are outraged that the in-

### Limerick storage plan fuels fears

But at each meeting, dozens of residents show up. In a post-Three Mile Island, post-9/11 world, some worry about radiation.

"You're asking us to put double trouble in our backyard," said Donna Cuthbert, a resident of neighboring North Coventry Township in Chester County. "It's really irresponsible to go down this path."

Limerick is also home to 80 of the plant's 700 workers — and nearly 500 more live within 10

One of them, Bob Mandik, rose at two recent township meetings and asked other coworkers there to do the same.

"It's not just some outside company that's in here," he said.

Others chafe with long-standing bitterness over the nuclear giant in their midst, township historian Bill Miller said. They didn't want it in the first place, and don't feel adequately compensated for the risks.

In 2005, Exelon won a reduction in the plant's assessed value for taxes from \$912 million to \$20 million. It is now the fourth-largest contributor to the Spring-Ford School District's coffers.

But one of the critics' biggest concerns is terrorism; What would happen if the exposed concrete vaults were targeted?

The NRC has done "extensive modeling," the commission's Randy Hall at a recent township meeting. Its research shows that the casks could withstand an attack "up to and including the crash of a fully loaded jetliner."

Michele Boyd of Public Citizen, a national watchdog group, said other tests showed that the casks could be harmed by a shoulder-fired missile. Her groups favors putting earth berms around the storage site, which a Maine plant has done. Limerick is not planning to do

A California antinuclear group, Mothers for Peace, sued the NRC, saying it should have considered the possibility of a terrorist attack at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in San Luis Obispo when it allowed dry cask storage there. In June, a federal appeals court agreed.

Dry cask opponents hope the ruling will prompt closer study of casks at other sites.

Kraft, of the lobbying group, said he thought that if the ruling stood, it would only present "an opportunity for anyone to stop anything."

At best, the casks are viewed as a stopgap solution until Yucca Mountain opens and other proposals — temporary regional storage sites, for instance, or new reprocessing technology — get traction.

David Lochbaum, director of the nuclear safety project for the Union of Concerned Scientists, said that, in some ways, dry cask storage is actually safer than a nearly full pool. If the pool leaks or the pumps and backup pumps fail, the rods could melt or catch fire, releasing a cloud of radiation.

Having an emptier pool would give workers extra hours in which to respond to an emergency, he said.

"There is no zero-risk answer to this problem," he said. "It's managing the risk to as low as you can get."

Contact staff writer Sandy Bauers at 215-854-5147 or sbauers@phillynews.com.



Medinesamy inivas, 2006

### Jupic worried

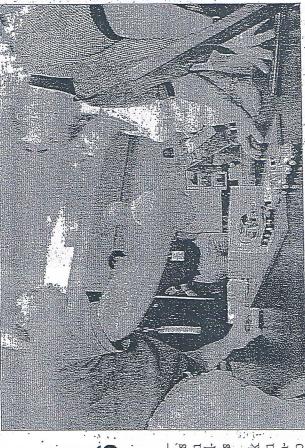
Imoyer@pottsmerc.com By Lindsay Moyer

LIMERICK - Many area residents voiced concerns or outright opposition. plans to store spent nuclear fuel left feelwho attended an information session on ng better about the project, but others

plans for the project. The supervisors'. ning commission voted unanimously to Limerick Fenerating Plant held the public open Supervisors reject land development nouse Tuesday after the township planrecommend that the Board vote is scheduled for Thursday. Nuclear's

Officials from Exelon, the Nuclear sgulatory Commission and Praistructear Inc., the vendor from cask system, were present at the open which Exelon is purchasing the dry house to answer questions. Regulatory

The three groups set up informational tables that included brochures, disproject model and even simulated play maps and photographs, videos, a



Daniel P. Creighton/The Mercury

Independent spent tuel storage installation project engineer Andy Giangiulio answers questions of Shirley Shearer of Linfield, who opposes the plan, and Wesley Huff of Limerick, who is for the plan.

nuclear fuel pellets for those attending to peruse;

Many people wanted to know where the above-ground casks housthe main power block of buildings and le drew a basic diagram that showed ing spent fuel would be located, proheir placement, immediately west of ect manager Kevitt Carrabine sald.

which time spent fuel stored in the that most people were also asking when Yucca Mountain would open, at dry cask system would be transported Carrabine and other officials said to the muclear depository in Nevada. inside the plant's security perimeter.

(See EXELON OPEN HOUSE on A3)



### READERS' I FUS

### Editorial was right on the mark

The Mercury deserves recognition and praise for the excellent editorial on July 9 about storage of high level radioactive waste at the Limerick Nuclear Power Plant.

Storage (or is it really disposal?) of high level waste at the Limerick power plant should be of concern to all who receive electricity through the PJM grid which includes some or part of 13 states and D.C. If there is an accident or if there is an act of terrorism, millions of us in the area of this grid could be without electricity. Indeed, it should be of even more concern to those of us who live within a 25 mile (at the least) radius of the site. I am one of those who, live within 10 miles of Limerick and I received one of those 118,000 new emergency brochures.

Terrorism is the reason to worry. The federal courts in a California case have ruled that the NRC must prepare an Environmental Impact. Statement (EIS) which considers the problems of dry cask storage and terrorism.

The discussion of the proposal to use dry casks at Limerick must be wider than just as a matter of concern to Limerick. This is why I think the township should tell the NRC to require an EIS which must include a full on-the-record public hearing for those of us who live within 10 miles, and indeed for all the general public who could be impacted. Expecting and

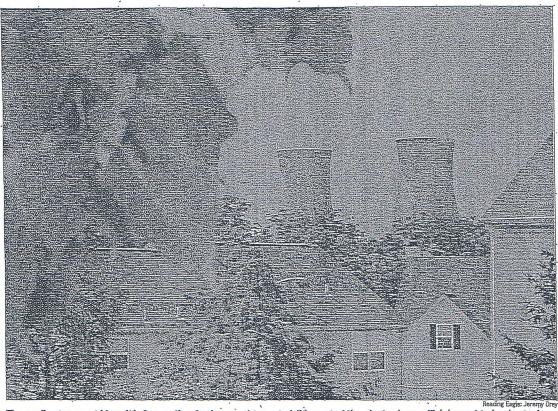
allowing the decisions on dry cask disposal/storage to be only on the shoulders of the Limerick supervisors is a heavy burden for them and one they should seek to put on others.

One-on-one and booth-by-booth public relations is just not the answer: Exelon's dog and pony show, no matter whether it is at a public or private site and no matter who pays for advisers and their supposed expertise, is not good enough when it comes to this issue:

I have confidence in public decision-making. It seems to me that this could be a life and death issue for many beyond the boundaries of one township. Broaden out the decision making burden and ask for a full EIS and public hearing, and let all of us be heard on this decision.

TINA DALEY Phoenixville

Reading, Pennsylvania | www.readingeagle.com | MONDAY July 10, 2006 | 50 cents



The cooling towers at Limerick Generating Station are the most visible part of the plant, where officials want to begin storing used nuclear fuel in outdoor containers beginning in 2009.

### Storing nuclear waste in spotlight at Limerick

Officials at the power plant in Montgomery County will defend their plans to store used reactor fuel in outdoor vaults at a meeting Tuesday.

HOW SPENT

NUCLEAR

STORED

By Mike Urban Reading Eagle

Residents and officials in Montgomery Elizabeth Rapczynski said.

County have concerns and ques-tions about Limerick Génerating Station's plan for storing nuclear waste, officials from Limerick Township and the plant have said.

But the facility's experts hope to answer those questions Tues-

Exelon Corp., which owns the plant in Limerick Township, will hold a community open house from 4 to 7 p.m. in the township building.

Exelon's plan is to store spent, or used, nuclear fuel in airtight steel cylinders that would be housed in outdoor concrete vaults beginning in 2009, company spokeswoman

> Before Exelon can build the vaults, the township supervisors must approve its proposal to build a 10,000-square-foot concrete pad to hold the vaults and... two related buildings for equipment storage.

The supervisors plan to vote on the proposal at their meeting

Nuclear continues on A2



### NUCLEAR | Waste questions to be answered

### Continued from A1

Several weeks ago, the township planning commission recommended the supervisors reject the plan because of a lack of information, but since then, the company has better explained its proposal to Limerick officials, Supervisor Renee Chesler said.

Security concerns limited the information in the initial proposal, Rapczyński said.

The waste storage facility, known as a dry cask system, would follow a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission-approved design and does not require township approval, said . Joseph H. McGrory Jr. of Norristown, township solicitor.

The commission would inspect the construction and stor-

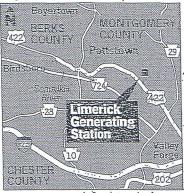
procedures and review the , stem regularly once it is in use, commission spokeswoman Diane Screnci said.

Limerick and other nuclear plants use heat from uranium to beil water and the steam turns turbines to generate electricity.

About every two years, onethird of the uranium must be replaced, and that spent fuel is put in permanent storage, she said.

The Limerick station has been storing spent fuel indoors in steel-lined concrete pools of water since it began commercial operations in 1986, Rapczynski said. '-

But the plant needs additional storage because its indoor storage area will be full by 2009, and the national underground storage facility proposed for Yucca Mountain, Nev., is not expected to be ready until 2015, she said.



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give the plant storage through 2020, Rapczynski said.

Preliminary construction would start this fall, she said ...

America's first dry cask system began use in 1986, and there now are about 35 such facilities. nationwide, including four that Exelon operates, she said.

None has resulted in radiation releases that affected the public or in radioactive contamination, and there have been no attempts to sabotage the systems, Screnci said.

"The systems are safe and environmentally sound," she

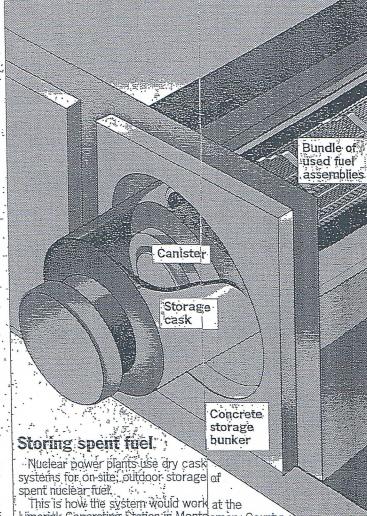
Rapczynski said that people living near the plant have nothg to fear. "This is a proven technology, ing to fear.

and it will be protected with robust security," she said.

Chesler said she did not know how she would vote but commended both the Limerick plant and the commission for their past actions. .

"The plant has been an extremely safe facility, and both Exelon and the NRC have proven track records," Chesler said.

Contact reporter Mike Urban at 610-The dry cask system would 371-5023 or murban@readingeagle.com.



Limerick Generating Station in Montgomery County: Fuel composed of uranium that is used in the nuclear fission process currently is choled in indoor pools. Once that fuel is cooled for at least five years, it would be stored in airtight and water tight steel canisters that

are 18 feet long and 7 feet in diameter.

The canisters would be encased horizontally in vaults made of steel concrete or other materials to shield workers and the public from radiation. Those vaults, which would be about the size of a one-car garage, are designed to withstand severe weather, sabotage or other outside forces.

Source: Exelon