

Comment Set 16, cont.  
Russell D. Hoffman

*Russell D. Hoffman*  
*Concerned Citizen*  
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Carlsbad, CA 92018  
(760) 720-7261 or (800) 551-2726  
*rhoffman@animatedsoftware.com*  
*www.animatedsoftware.com*

May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Re: Why I am calling for an *immediate* shut-down of San Onofre Nuclear Waste Generating Station (additional comments for CPUC 2004101008 (A.04-02-026))

Andrew Barnsdale, SONGS/CPUC  
c/o Aspen Environmental Group  
235 Montgomery Street Suite 935  
San Francisco CA 94104

Dear Mr. Barnsdale,

During the CPUC hearings Ray Golden, in his introductory comments, stated that SCE currently has – and will be adding again, soon – more renewable capacity than San Onofre produces. Why this doesn't prove my point that we *can* replace San Onofre is beyond me.

Mr. Golden also stated that the cracks in the steam generator tubes that they plug are all “microscopic” and have “zero leakage.” This is in direct contradistinction to my claims otherwise in the intro to the “25 reasons” article in **Protecting California... Why San Onofre cannot be part of the Solution**, which I submitted previously as part of the official record and which was referred to by several activists (all favorably) during the CPUC/SONGS DEIR hearings.

I say this in response to Mr. Golden's comments:

- There are 9,350 tubes in each steam generator – a total of about 112 miles of tubing.
- Without testing for leakage, the “microscopic” cracks would require microscopes to find (by definition), or, at least, complex, sophisticated, possibly bulky, and expensive technology.
- About 10% of the tubes – around 3000 of them – have been plugged already.
- Each plugged tube was cracking for an average of nine months *or more* before being detected and plugged, since plugging only occurs during refueling outages (or perhaps during some other types of outages, but not usually).
- Cracks tend to expand exponentially.
- Currently, during each refueling outage, about 150 tubes are plugged and another 150 more repaired. The number plugged or repaired at each outage will tend to increase exponentially.
- There seems to be no difference between a release which is “ALARA” and “zero releases” in Ray Golden's mind. He will routinely refer to anything which is “Below Regulatory Concern” (or “As Low As Reasonably Achievable,” an industry catch-phrase and technical term for “spill whatever you want whenever you want to”) as “no release”

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even when it's physically impossible for that to be true – some venting *had to occur* and yet Mr. Golden will describe it as “zero.”

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And lastly, as explained to me by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission:

- Ray Golden has a license to lie. (“Statements made by the public affairs officer of a NRC licensee are not regulated activities. Therefore, the veracity of such statements will not be investigated by the NRC.” – Comment in a registered letter to this author from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002, specifically in response to a letter of complaint that Ray Golden lies to the media, to the people, and to state government officials.)

So, I doubt that absolutely ZERO of these tubes have leaked primary coolant into the secondary coolant loop. And I doubt that there is 100% successful containment of the radionuclides after that, either – the whole plant leaks like a sieve.

Since the facility would inevitably be turned OFF if they don't replace the steam generators (by NRC regulation), the proper baseline should be a non-operating – or even non-existent – plant.

I've recently learned that the December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004 Sumatra tsunami has apparently proven to geologists around the world that one “mega-earthquake” can sometimes create a tsunami which is much larger and more widespread than anything previously expected AND it can shake the earth more, and further away from the epicenter, than previously expected. The December tsunami was caused by an earthquake which lasted about 10 minutes (an extremely long time as earthquakes go) and whose fault line stretched more than 700 miles. In the midst of all the horrors of an earthquake, and/or tsunami, our worst nightmare would still be San Onofre and Diablo Canyon.

A shuttered reactor is far safer than an operating one and moving the fuel away from the coast only really helps if we also stop making more of it.

Ray Golden specifically said the spent fuel might someday be discovered to be a great source of wealth for someone. But the nuclear industry has been looking for 50 years and they can't even find a good way to get rid of it, let alone, to make money from it! San Onofre's radioactive waste is far more likely to be a source of misery for millions of people than a source of future wealth for anyone. And every day we create more, the danger also increases that there will be ANY accident.

At the hearings, Commissioner Brown asked me if I knew of any studies “proving” a link between San Onofre's daily releases and local cancers. First let me state that the ways the nuclear “Mafia” can fool with statistics would obviously surprise Mr. Brown. One trick is to use as a “baseline” the six months prior to opening the reactor for commercial operations – but the reactor was already running then, in test mode, and often releasing even more crud than when it settles down. Another trick is to use local counties as if they were rectangular blocks around the plant, rather than their complex actual shapes. Another trick is to use the wind rose data as an absolute, and whichever way the wind blows most frequently is compared to where it blows least frequently, not during the actual test period, but based on historical data which is often inaccurate and unverified. Yet another trick is to just keep doing different studies, and throw out (quash) all the ones that might show significance ( $P < .05$ ) in the wrong direction, but sooner or later one is bound to go the other way – and that's the one they publish.

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When San Onofre was built, and even just a few years ago, there was less statistical “proof” of the dangers of low-level radiation than there is now. But there is no question that San Onofre’s daily build-up of radionuclides is extremely hazardous, were just one minute’s worth to get out into our environment. AND there is no question that their daily releases of such things as tritium and all the rest are also a constant hazard to the local population. I have included several recent articles about these issues.

The activists at the recent CPUC SONGS DEIR hearings were virtually unanimous in calling for a shutdown. For the first two hearings, I’m sure this will be reflected in the transcripts of those hearings, but it was true at all four, as indicated in subsequent news articles (a sample is included below).

The reason for this is clear: It’s way past time to close these aging “buckets of bolts.” But who will take the initiative? The CPUC can and should. Surely, between new tsunami data, SHOCKING new earthquake data from just this week, new terrorism levels worldwide and nationally since 9-11, and Davis-Besse’s warning to us all, the CPUC has enough reason to tell the NRC to take their nuclear waste, and their “licensed” nuclear waste generators, and go away. There’s just no license for premeditated murder, which is what running these things amounts to. **Premeditated murder.**

Sincerely,

  
**Russell D. Hoffman**  
Concerned Citizen  
Carlsbad CA

Attachments: Various recent articles circulated on the Internet showing that low-level radiation is now a well-known and unequivocal hazard and other related issues about nuclear power and about San Onofre in particular.

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From: Sidney Goodman  
To: member@ucsusa.org  
Sent: 5/12/2005 8:29:57 PM  
Subject: Nuclear power

I think the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) is mistaken in thinking that nuclear plants are acceptable if they are only made safer.

The problem is that people are not safe enough for nuclear power.

The imperfection of people, their greed, stupidity, deceit, and corruption is the root cause of nuclear power problems.

The degree of perfection that is really required to assure health and safety is beyond the realistic attainment of human beings, industrial equipment, and adequate design.

While I admire most of what UCS has done and is doing, the failure to address the following is very disturbing.

Failure to insist on the abolition of the Price Anderson Act, a federal law which abolishes everyone's property rights to protect the property rights of nuclear utilities.

Failure to focus on the serious net energy yield problems of nuclearplants. Swept under the rug, with fraud and deceit that makes Watergate look like small apples.

Failure to emphasize that nuclear plants do consume and burn large [quantities] of fossil fuel.

Failure to insist on no-fly zones over nuclear plants. Yet, there are no-fly zones over Disneyland and Disney World. Mickey Mouse is protected better than the rest of us.

Failure to mention the health toll of Chernobyl, where Ukrainian health officials have treated more than a million victims for radiation illness.

Failure to focus on the victims of TMI, more than a thousand of whom have been harmed.

It also disappoints that the UCS failed to mention the book I wrote, "Asleep at the Geiger Counter". This book has been endorsed by Dr. Helen Caldicott, the Nuclear Information Resource Service, and four small safe energy groups.

One safe energy advocate has a library of books on nuclear power. He told me that mine is the best of the lot.

Yet, no publicity.

Not a single major media newspaper or magazine has been willing to do a book review. This has reduced the circulation of this teach-in book (written for the layman) to a microscopic level. Too bad. Much of what is in the book is exactly what UCS has been advocating throughout the years, except for acceptance of nuclear power on the premise that it can be made safe, when it can't be, not ever.

The advocates of nuclear power belong to the Union of Unconcerned Scientists.

Sidney J. Goodman, P.E., M.S.M.E.  
Professional Engineer (NJ license # 15326)  
158 Grandview Lane, Mahwah, NJ 07430  
(201) 327-5158; (973) 616-7300 (laboratory - work)  
"Sidney Goodman" <gizmogeek@mindspring.com>

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Russell D. Hoffman

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From: Molly Johnson <mollypj@yahoo.com>  
Subject: Public says go green instead of fixing San Onofre  
To: me <peacegrannie@hotmail.com>

Public says go green instead of fixing San Onofre - a  
referendum on nuclear power

Public says go green instead of fixing San Onofre

By: PAUL SISSON - Staff Writer  
[http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2005/05/18/news/coastal/22\\_54\\_165\\_17\\_05.txt](http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2005/05/18/news/coastal/22_54_165_17_05.txt)

OCEANSIDE ---- A town hall meeting on proposed repairs at the San Onofre Nuclear Generation Station on Tuesday turned into a referendum on nuclear power itself.

Most of the 28 people who spoke at the meeting, held by the California Public Utilities Commission, came down against spending more than \$800 million to replace four steam generators at San Onofre's two functioning nuclear reactors.

Southern California Edison, San Onofre's majority owner, has asked the commission for permission to replace the generators and to pass the cost to its customers. The utility claims that cracking inside the monolithic steam generators, which produce steam that in turn spins turbines to produce electricity, could be unusable by 2010, meaning San Onofre would have to shut down.

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Many, but not all, of those who spoke Tuesday said they would prefer that the commission deny Edison's request and invest in renewable energy sources such as solar power and wind energy.

Oceanside resident Maegan Prentice said she has already installed photovoltaic cells on the roof of her home that turn sunlight into electricity. She said that if 18 percent of the rooftops in San Diego County were covered with solar panels, there would be no need for San Onofre.

"If we keep putting money into projects that are already doomed, we just keep putting off the future," she said.

Pastor J. Steven Beckham drove to Oceanside from Riverside to call for a shift from atomic power to green energy. He said it would take about 100 square miles of solar panels to power the nation.

"Do we have 100 square miles of rooftops in Southern California?" he asked. "I think we do. We've got the resources to do clean power now."

As did several other speakers, Beckham noted that nuclear power plants generate radioactive waste which the nation still has not decided where to store.

"I just can't see how it's ethical from any point of view," Beckham said.

Al Tschaeche of Encinitas was one of several in attendance who defended

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San Onofre's repair plans. Tschaeché said he worked as a health physicist in the nuclear industry for more than 50 years and found no evidence of chronic health risks.

"There's nothing wrong with nuclear power," he said.

Tschaeché noted that, if San Onofre is not repaired, the plant would likely have to be replaced with several natural gas-fired power plants. He noted that burning fossil fuels generates carbon dioxide, which contributes to worldwide temperature increases known as global warming.

A draft environmental impact report commissioned by the utilities commission provides contrary statements about the viability of renewable energy. The report states that it would not be feasible to replace the more than 2,200 megawatts of electricity San Onofre generates ---- enough to power more than 2 million homes ---- with renewable sources.

After the meeting, Commissioner Geoffrey Brown said the debate over atomic versus renewable power is at the crux of the commission's decision on whether to allow the repairs that Edison has requested.

"The question is whether we can subtract nuclear energy and totally replace it with renewables. At this point, I don't think we can do that," Brown said.

Contact staff writer Paul Sisson at (760) 901-4087 or [psisson@nctimes.com](mailto:psisson@nctimes.com) <<mailto:psisson@nctimes.com>>.

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"Should any political party attempt to abolish social security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again in our political history. There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes that you can do these things. Among them are a few Texas oil millionaires, and an occasional politician or businessman from other areas. Their number is negligible and they are stupid." President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954

Molly P Johnson  
6290 Hawk Ridge Place, San Miguel, CA 93451  
805 467-2431

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In

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From: Molly Johnson <mollypj@yahoo.com>  
Subject: Just the Facts: A Look at the Five Fatal Flaws of Nuclear Power  
To: me <peacegrannie@hotmail.com>

Excellent fact sheets! Molly

[http://www.citizen.org/cmep/energy\\_enviro\\_nuclear/nuclear\\_power\\_plants/articles.cfm?ID=13447](http://www.citizen.org/cmep/energy_enviro_nuclear/nuclear_power_plants/articles.cfm?ID=13447)

Just the Facts: A Look at the Five Fatal Flaws of Nuclear Power

This new series of educational fact sheets about nuclear power is aimed at refuting some of the central arguments that nuclear power advocates use when advancing their message. Specifically, there are five key reasons why nuclear power is not a solution to the United States' energy needs: cost, security, safety, waste, and proliferation.

- \*  
Just the Facts: Cost (PDF)
- \*  
Just the Facts: Security (PDF)
- \*  
Just the Facts: Safety (PDF)
- \*  
Just the Facts: Waste (PDF)
- \*  
Just the Facts: Proliferation (PDF)

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In

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The subject of nuclear power is making news headlines, but missing from the public debate are many of the facts. The same company executives and members of Congress repeat their message over and over, but that message must be dissected to ensure it's accurate.

With increased attention on nuclear energy this year, the Senate energy bill is likely to include many nuclear-friendly provisions designed to encourage energy companies to build new reactors for the first time in 30 years. Already, the U.S. House of Representatives passed its version of energy legislation last month, including \$6.1 billion in taxpayer subsidies and tax breaks, as well as other incentives.

"Should any political party attempt to abolish social security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again in our political history. There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes that you can do these things. Among them are a few Texas oil millionaires, and an occasional politician or businessman from other areas. Their number is negligible and they are stupid." President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954

Molly P Johnson  
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In

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**No Recipient, Bennett Ramberg**

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To:  
From: "Russell D. Hoffman" <rhoffman@animatedsoftware.com>  
Subject: Bennett Ramberg  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Attached:

4 New York Times Letter to Editor North Korea & Nukes

Date: Mon, 23 May 2005 11:49:05 EDT

New York Times

Bennett Ramberg letter to Editor May 23

To the Editor:  
Re "Letting Nukes Happen" (editorial, May 16):

Your presumption that the United States can buy North Korea's fidelity  
not to remain a nuclear weapons state is a chimera.

Because regime change is unlikely any time soon, the United States and  
North Korea's neighbors will confront the risk that North Korea could launch a  
nuclear strike because of intelligence failure, a delegation of nuclear  
initiation to field commanders, and poor command and control.  
The interlocutors with North Korea can reduce these risks by providing  
Pyongyang with such nuclear confidence measures as a hot line, satellite  
intelligence and economic engagement.

Consider the Bush administration's alternative and its consequences: a  
further isolated North Korea, increasingly paranoid, with poor intelligence  
placing its nuclear forces on hair-trigger alert. This is not an outcome the  
international community can abet.

Bennett Ramberg  
Los Angeles, May 16, 2005  
The writer was a policy analyst at the State Department, 1989-90.

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JerseyShoreNuclearWatch

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To: jerseyshorenuclearwatch@yahogroups.com  
From: Christopher Couture <chris@networkguy.net>  
Subject: [JerseyShoreNuclearWatch] The Japan Times: Radiation leak 'could kill 400,000'

Not directly about Oyster Creek, but a good article about what could possibly happen...

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20031028a2.htm>

**Radiation leak 'could kill 400,000'**

Researcher bases grave study on Chernobyl disaster

A large-scale radiation leak at a major nuclear reactor in Japan could kill more than 400,000 people and cost up to 460 trillion yen over 50 years, according to a study by a Kyoto Sangyo University researcher released Monday.

Pak Sung Jun, a full-time lecturer at the university, made the estimate assuming an accident similar to the one in Chernobyl, Ukraine, occurred at a 1,180-mw reactor in Japan such as either the No. 3 or No. 4 pressurized water reactors of the Oi nuclear plant in Fukui Prefecture.

Few estimates have been made on the damage a nuclear accident in Japan would cause since the former Science and Technology Agency's estimate in 1959, made before the government began building nuclear plants on a large scale. The agency came up with a cost of 3.7 trillion yen, experts said.

The late Takeshi Seo, a former Kyoto University Research Reactor Institute worker, estimated how radiation would spread and affect people in a nuclear meltdown. But no one has expressed the estimates in terms of monetary cost, according to Hiroaki Koide of the institute.

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JerseyShoreNuclearWatch

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Pak applied various data, including income, agricultural output and population, to a formula Seo developed in calculating the cost of damage over 50 years.

High-level radiation would prevent people from being able to live within 160 to 200 km downwind of the nuclear plant, and no farming could occur within at least 500 km.

The most damage would occur if north winds blew from Fukui toward the major cities of Kyoto and Osaka. Relocation costs and the losses for agricultural and fisheries industries would total 391 trillion yen, and the costs of human suffering would reach 66 trillion yen, including medical costs.

The death toll would be the largest, at 410,000, if west winds blew to contaminate the more populous Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture. Immediate deaths were estimated at up to 17,000.

The average damage estimate came to 104 trillion yen. But liability insurance, to which nuclear reactor operators are obliged to subscribe, caps coverage at 60 billion yen, less than one-1,700th of the average damage estimate.

Pak said the current insurance system allows victims to receive only small sums as compensation. He called for discussion on Japan's nuclear-reliant energy policy to be based on actual estimates.

The 1986 Chernobyl accident involved a meltdown of the reactor core and explosions. Thirty people were killed immediately and radiation was released into the atmosphere.

**The Japan Times: Oct. 28, 2003**

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JerseyShoreNuclearWatch

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Delivered-To: rhoffman@pop3-02.adnc.com  
X-eGroups-Return: sentto-459877-1963-1078371405-  
rhoffman=animatedsoftware.com@returns.groups.yahoo.com  
X-eGroups-Return: jcreedst@msn.com  
X-Sender: jcreedst@msn.com  
X-Apparently-To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
X-Originating-Email: [jcreedst@msn.com]  
X-Sender: jcreedst@msn.com  
To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
X-OriginalArrivalTime: 02 Mar 2004 17:05:12.0387 (UTC) FILETIME=[86622130:01C40078]  
X-eGroups-Remote-IP: 65.54.173.37  
From: "Denise Garner" <jcreedst@msn.com>  
X-Originating-IP: [67.82.229.123]  
X-eGroups-Approved-By: flower68child <ncohen12@comcast.net> via web; 04 Mar 2004 03:35:47 -0000  
X-eGroups-Remote-IP: 66.218.66.99  
Mailing-List: list JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com; contact JerseyShoreNuclearWatch-  
owner@yahoogroups.com  
Delivered-To: mailing list JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
List-Unsubscribe: <mailto:JerseyShoreNuclearWatch-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com>  
Date: Tue, 02 Mar 2004 12:05:12 -0500  
Subject: Re: [JerseyShoreNuclearWatch]  
Reply-To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
X-NAS-Bayes: #0: 6.17725E-281; #1: 1  
X-NAS-Classification: 0  
X-NAS-MessageID: 1361  
X-NAS-Validation: {880D4627-8FD9-4821-AE3F-0E8173277AE6}

Paula,

You guys are doing a great job. This state has so many problems, I think most of them come from the elected people. These are people that don't have an understand about science they only get into office because they what

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Russell D. Hoffman

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to do things for them self. And that is a major problem. But, keep educating everyone and hopefully we'll get them out of office too.

Take care

Denise Garner  
SPARE  
Save, Preserve and Respect Our Environment  
732-928-7896

>From: "Paula A. Gotsch" <paulagotsch@verizon.net>  
>Reply-To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
>To: <JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com>  
>Subject: Re: [JerseyShoreNuclearWatch]  
>Date: Mon, 1 Mar 2004 14:20:49 -0500  
>  
>The Millstone Plant (circa - Oyster Creek Plant) in Connecticut is  
>calculated to be the cause of the large amount of breast cancer on Long  
>Island. Radioactive path for the plant was from CT wafting across Long  
>Island Sound.  
>Similarly Oyster Creek radiation followed a flow right up the (now  
>designated) cancer corridor in NJ. Don't remember the name of the report.  
> ----- Original Message -----  
> From: Edith  
> To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
> Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2004 11:31 AM  
> Subject: [JerseyShoreNuclearWatch]  
>  
>  
> We have had requests regrdng the Tooth Fairy Project and the  
>relationship  
> between breast cancer and low level radiation.  
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file:///E:\DOCUMENTS\1\RTISSET~1\HOME LOCAL S~1\Temp\end36.htm

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Russell D. Hoffman

>  
> Edith Gbur  
>  
> =====  
> LIFE'S' DELICATE BALANCE - CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF BREAST CANCER  
>  
> Despite the fact that the cancer epidemic has not ended, the publisher  
>has taken Janette Sherman's book out of print. She has negotiated to get  
>the last remaining copies.  
>  
> Far too few people understand that cancer is caused by ... carcinogens!  
>These are the chemicals, pesticides, endocrine disrupters, and nuclear  
>radiation permeating our environment. We need to educate our families,  
>friends and colleagues in order to begin primary prevention. Let us keep  
>the next generation from developing cancer.  
>  
> Copies are \$10.00 each plus \$3.85 postage for the U. S. or Canada.  
> (Original publisher's price was \$24.95). For copies, please contact the  
>author at:  
>  
> Janette D. Sherman, M. D.  
> P. O. Box 4605  
> Alexandria, VA 22303  
> toxdoc.js@verizon.net  
> [www.janettesherman.com](http://www.janettesherman.com)  
>  
>  
> Jersey Shore Nuclear Watch, PO Box 4283, Brick, NJ 08723 Phone  
>732-830-6565 [www.jerseyshorenuclearwatch.org](http://www.jerseyshorenuclearwatch.org)  
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**Russell D. Hoffman**

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To: JerseyShoreNuclearWatch@yahoogroups.com  
From: Edith <egbur@optonline.net>  
Subject: [JerseyShoreNuclearWatch] Radiation and Public Health Project website on 8 nuclear plant study

Press Release based on Study of 8 nuclear plants - demonstrate that when nuclear plants shut down the rate of cancer goes down.

Edith Gbur

April 26, 2000 Press Release Contact: Scott Cullen:

(516) 819-4886

Jerry Brown:

(305) 321-5612

Infant Deaths Drop Dramatically After Nuclear Plants Close  
Model, Congressman Join Groups In Calling on Government  
to Consider Adverse Health Effects of Radiation  
When Renewing Nuclear Plant Licenses

[WASHINGTON, D.C.] – Infant death rates near five U.S. nuclear plants dropped immediately and dramatically after the reactors closed, a new study shows, raising questions about the government's refusal to consider the effects of radioactive emissions from nuclear plants on local residents (see attached).

Moreover, dramatic decreases in childhood cancer cases and deaths from birth defects, which are strongly affected by radiation exposure, occurred near one of the reactors. The study suggests that the health of 42 million Americans who live downwind and within 50 miles of a nuclear plant may be affected by these reactors, according to the study's author. The study was conducted by the New York-based Radiation and Public Health Project and published in the spring issue of the scientific journal Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology.

In light of the study, model Christie Brinkley today joined Rep. Michael Forbes (D-N.Y.) and others in calling upon the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to immediately consider whether adverse health effects are associated with nuclear plant operations before renewing nuclear power plant licenses. Brinkley is a board member of the STAR (Standing for Truth About Radiation) Foundation, a group formed in 1997 by concerned

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Long Island residents.

"As a mother of young children who lives near nuclear facilities, I worry daily that radiation from these plants may be deadly to our children," Brinkley said. "So far, the federal government has buried its head in the sand. If closing the nuclear power plants was not responsible for the decline in infant deaths, what was?"

The NRC rules do not consider the potential adverse health effects of radioactive emissions when considering license renewal applications. Owners of twenty-eight nuclear reactors at 17 nuclear facilities around the country are scheduled to seek license renewals by 2003. The NRC has never voluntarily studied the link between radioactive emissions from nuclear plants and patterns of cancer.

The study, conducted by Joseph J. Mangano, a research associate at the Radiation and Public Health Project, examined infant death rates in counties within 50 miles and in the prevailing wind direction of five reactors: Fort St. Vrain (located near Denver, CO), LaCrosse (near LaCrosse, WI), Millstone/Haddam Neck (near New London CT), Rancho Seco (near Sacramento, CA.) and Trojan (near Portland, OR).

In the first two years after the reactors closed, infant death rates in the downwind counties under 40 miles from the plants fell 15 to 20 percent from the previous two years, compared to an average U.S. decline of just six percent between 1985 and 1996. In each of the five areas studied, no other nuclear reactor operated within 70 miles of the closed reactor, essentially creating a "nuclear-free zone."

The study detailed the plunges in newly-diagnosed leukemia and cancer cases and birth defect deaths in children under five years in the four-county local area downwind from Rancho Seco. This excessive decline has continued through the first seven years after the June 1989 closing. In contrast, the local infant death rate rose in the two years after Rancho Seco began operations in 1974.

"This article is the first to document improvements in health after a nuclear plant closes," says study author Mangano.

"It supports many other studies showing elevated childhood cancer near operating reactors." "The federal government allows nuclear reactors to emit a certain level of radiation, saying that the amount is too low to result in adverse local health effects. However, this study clearly calls that assumption into question, as do other

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studies"

The announcement comes on the 14th anniversary of the catastrophic accident at Chernobyl, a nuclear power reactor. Increased infant cancer and death rates after Chernobyl have been documented, not just in the former Soviet Union, but in Western Europe and the US, where Chernobyl fallout levels were deemed by regulators to be within safe limits.

Nuclear plants seeking re-licensing this year include Oconee Nuclear Station in northwest South Carolina; Arkansas Nuclear One in Russellville, Ark.; Edwin I. Hatch in southern Georgia; and Turkey Point near Miami, Fla. In 2001, plants expected to seek re-licensing include Catawba, which lies on the border between North Carolina and South Carolina; North Anna, located near Fredericksburg, Va.; Surry, near Virginia Beach, Va.; and Peach Bottom, located near Lancaster, Pa. Recently, the government approved a license renewal application for Calvert cliffs, located near Baltimore, Md.

Said Forbes, whose eastern Long Island district lies across the Long Island Sound from Millstone Nuclear Power Station in Connecticut,

"On this day in particular, which is the fourteenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in Russia, we need to address the very real and legitimate concerns of people who live near nuclear reactors. At the very least, the government has a responsibility to determine whether emissions from these plants are harming people."

Janette Sherman, an Alexandria, Va., M.D. who specializes in internal medicine and toxicology, and has written books about the causes of breast cancer and the relationship between chemical exposure and disease, said she believes Mangano's study confirms the link between radiation and illness.

"This confirms the best of public health principles: that when you remove a known cause of illness, health improves," Sherman said. "The adverse effects on humans exposed to radiation are predictable. What is gratifying about the research is that it showed childhood health measures increasing so dramatically and quickly after the reactors closed"

For some of those who live near reactors, the government's inaction has been maddening. Randy Snell, a New York resident who lives near the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL), learned several years ago that his 8-

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year-old daughter had developed a rare soft tissue cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma. Snell also has uncovered 19 other cases of the same rare cancer in Suffolk County; in one area near BNL, the rate of this cancer in children under 10 since 1994 is 15 times the national average. "I have no doubt that radiation from nuclear reactors sickens people who live nearby," Snell said.

"What is really disheartening, though, is that state and federal public health agencies haven't lifted a finger to confirm the link between Brookhaven and all these rare child cancers. I hope this study forces them to act."

Attachment  
IMPROVEMENTS IN INFANT DEATH RATE  
AFTER CLOSING NUCLEAR REACTORS  
(decreases in death rate age 0-1)

REACTOR CLOSED YEAR % CHANGE  
IN INFANT DEATH RATE  
LaCROSSE, WI 1987 -15.3%  
RANCHO SECO, CA 1989 -16.0%  
FORT ST. VRAIN, CO 1989 -15.9%  
TROJAN, OR 1992 -18.0%  
MILLSTONE, CT 1995 -17.4%  
BIG ROCK POINT, MI 1997 -54.1%  
MAINE YANKEE, ME 1997 -33.4%  
U.S. Average 1985-96 -6.4%

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OTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN INFANT HEALTH AFTER CLOSING RANCHO SECO, CA REACTOR

Percent Change in Birth Defect Death and Cancer Incidence Rates

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CATEGORY LOCAL US  
DEATHS 0-1 FROM BIRTH DEFECTS -20.9% - 5.8%  
DEATHS 1-4 FROM BIRTH DEFECTS -29.3% - 7.0%  
CANCER CASES 0-4 -37.2% +6.2%

Two years before and after closing are compared (e.g., LaCrosse 1986-87 vs. 1988-89). All downwind counties less than 50 miles from closed reactor are included. No other reactors are located within 70 miles of above reactors. Millstone was temporarily closed from late 1995 to mid-1998. All data from U.S. Centers for Disease Control (<http://www.cdc.gov>), except for Big Rock Point and Maine Yankee, which are available from the states. Prepared by Joseph J. Mangano, MPH, MBA, Radiation and Public Health Project, April 19, 2000

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