From: Bruce McBeath
To: Bill.Storm@state.mn.us;
Subject: EIS - PINGP Commentary
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2009 8:28:14 AM

Bill:

These comments are in response to the EIS you submitted to former task force members. Thank you for inviting addition commentary on your report.

I'm directing my comments to Section 4.5, specifically related to "Psychological Impacts Associated with Living Near a Nuclear Generating Plant." As a task force member who is a practicing clinical psychologist in the Red Wing area, I addressed my responses primarily to these concerns. At that time, I suggested that anxiety and related stress responses could be factors impacting children and families living near the nuclear plant and that some baseline data be developed that could be monitored over a period of time. Also, monitoring plant employee stress levels as a health and safety factor would appear of fundamental importance. There may be an on-going process at PINGP for doing that, but I am not aware that we, as a committee, received any information about it if such a process exists.

Your EIS report makes some mention of the more generalized impact on a community associated with living by a nuclear plant, but does not specifically address the concerns I (and others) raised earlier. There are baseline data on other health related areas, like radioactive emission testing, but no baseline data on significant psychological factors affecting children, families, and employees at PINGP. If it were not possible to discern these factors, we might understand this omission. Quantitative measures may be superficial and of little value here. But good qualitative tools are available to provide a "community psychological health" assessment that would highlight areas for further on-going monitoring and evaluation. Psychological factors are as "real" as physical factors are, and an adequate process for their routine consideration needs to be included in your report.

Concern about psychological impacts on the host community/communities from a larger, community-based, perspective have also not been addressed. In the study cited in your report("Living with Nuclear Power in Britain:A Mixed Methods Study"), the researchers identified and applied a mixed qualitative/quantitative process that surfaced

significant themes related to how anxiety was experienced and managed by respondents living in the communities containing nuclear power stations. Significant for our purposes is their description of the relationship between anxiety and the level of "institutional trust"experienced by members of these communities. Sustaining transparency in the interactions between nuclear plant staff, government officials and the host communities appeared a primary factor in reducing anxiety. "Trust in the system" is itself an aggravating or mitigating psychological factor that requires monitoring and evaluation.

In summary, I propose that psychological factors affecting individuals and communities living near the PINGP can and should be identified and monitored. The increasing likelihood that dry cast storage will remain at Prairie Island into perpetuity only increases the need for effectively monitoring health and safety factors, and psychological factors rank equal among them.
Thank you,
Bruce McBeath