

Bill Storm

From: DuaneKarjala@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2008 7:31 PM
To: Bill.Storm@state.mn.us
Cc: jcullen@republican-eagle.com
Subject: Prairie Island Nuclear Plant License Changes

Sir,

First, let me introduce myself by describing my background. I am a retired Mechanical Engineer who spent 35 years working at nuclear power plants in several states. My last job was as an inspector at Prairie Island for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for 6 years. My comments are based on those 35 years of experience.

My understanding of the licensing process is that the Prairie Island license is issued and under the jurisdiction of the federal government, and the state of Minnesota does not have jurisdiction. Minnesota issued restrictions on the dry cask storage facility, and ran the risk of having its rules declared unconstitutional.

I am in favor of the license extension and power upgrade for several reasons. Other than the Three-mile Island accident in 1969, the nuclear power industry has a good track record of providing safe, environmentally clean, and economical electrical power. The industry has learned and fully incorporated the lessons learned from the Three-mile Island accident.

Prairie Island provides safe, clean, and economical electrical power for Minnesota. It also contributes to the Red Wing tax base and provides high income jobs for our community.

My 6 years as an inspector at Prairie Island continually concluded that Prairie Island is operating safely and complies with federal regulations.

I understand the concerns of local citizens regarding the storage of spent fuel. My recommendation for that concern is that congress should be urged to allow the nuclear power industry to reprocess spent nuclear fuel. There are several reasons why spent nuclear fuel should be reprocessed:

- There is considerable useable energy still contained in the spent fuel that can be recovered and used, contributing to the economical savings.
- Reprocessing the spent fuel greatly reduces the volume of waste to be stored. The American Nuclear Society published an article which describes the result of research which determined that if spent fuel is reprocessed, the volume of waste for a lifetime of nuclear electricity per person is the size of a soda pop can. We recycle aluminum, glass, paper, and other wastes. Reprocessing nuclear fuel is the environmentally responsible course of action.
- Spent nuclear fuel is reprocessed for reactors in Europe and Asia. We do not reprocess spent fuel because of political issues (former Pres. Jimmy Carter issued an executive order banning it due to security concerns). Security technology has evolved significantly and security is no longer an issue. My experience is that whenever technology and politics meet, technology loses.
- Reprocessing the spent fuel would remove it from storage at the plant sites and reduce the concerns of the local citizens.

If I can be of further assistance by providing additional information or answering questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Respectfully,

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9/12/2008