

## Citizens' Oversight Projects (COPs)

771 Jamacha Rd #148  
El Cajon, CA 92019  
CitizensOversight.org  
619-820-5321

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### OPEN LETTER TO CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS AND CONCERNED CITIZENS

## ***STOP THE BEACH-FRONT NUCLEAR WASTE DUMP***

Does anyone think the right place to store 3.6 million pounds of extremely deadly high-level nuclear waste is only 100 feet from the ocean and only inches above the high-tide level? Actually, everyone agrees that this is a *very bad* place to put such a facility, and that other places would be far safer. Regulators refuse to talk about safety issues because they have been convinced that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the NRC, is the only agency that can consider safety. We disagree. Unfortunately, the NRC has historically been the agency to promote nuclear energy. They enable the nuclear industry by approving systems that can be reasonably safe, but certainly not perfectly safe, and where you put them makes a big difference. The NRC has no say as to where they are built, nor whether you should build them at all.

So then, who IS in charge of deciding where we should store nuclear waste? Apparently, Southern California Edison (SCE), who wants to do only the easiest thing from a paperwork and public interaction standpoint. They absolutely do not want any extended discussion about the issue so as to avoid any negative publicity that might impact their stock price. So they conclude on the beach only 100 feet from the water is best. What?!

SCE says it will only stay here for 35 years while we wait for the Department of Energy to provide a place for it, and then it will be very easy to move from this location. The reality is that the DOE has a very bad record in providing any waste disposal sites, and to think it will suddenly happen in record time is lying to ourselves. A better guess is that once it is in the ground, it will stay at this location far longer than they think. In fact, I daresay it will be VERY, VERY HARD to move once it is in the ground. What makes you think it will be all that much easier in the future than it is now?

Add to that, the not too unlikely possibility that something will go wrong, either a dropped canister or rapid corrosion. Or, like we saw at the WIPP nuclear waste site in New Mexico, human error. There, a worker mistakenly purchased organic kitty litter instead of inorganic kitty litter, which they use to soak up radioactive liquids for storage. Sounds harmless enough. But the organic kitty litter is expansive and over time, a number of storage drums burst, causing the whole underground (salt mine) storage site to become radioactive and was forced to shut down. God forbid that such a thing should happen here, but it can.

We don't know what or when it will happen, but since it will be around basically forever, something is bound to happen. It's Murphy's law.

Nuclear waste remains toxic to humans for 2500 centuries. That's more than 40 times all recorded human history, and so what we do today should not be rushed to adopt a short-term solution that is only attractive

because it might allow SCE to avoid negative publicity. Yet, this is what we have seen happen. A Coastal Commission permit was granted after an extremely short meeting, with only two minutes per speaker to make a case against the permit. They considered no other alternatives that were required any work whatsoever. This is “Bad Decision-making 101.”

After they approved it, we filed our lawsuit, and now, a trial will be held in Superior Court before Judge Judith Hayes, currently scheduled for April 14, 2017, at 2:00 P.M. in Dept C68. This is our BEST CHANCE to turn the clock back and revoke this permit before we make a VERY BIG MISTAKE. If the permit is revoked, we have more time to consider our options and avoid this absurd result.

You might hear that the fuel pools are safer than dry storage. In many cases, we agree with that. Many nuclear plants, like the design at Fukushima, have their spent fuel pools three stories up. At San Onofre, the spent fuel pools are in the ground and are considered very safe, and they were expected to be in operation for another 40 years. Plus, we are NOT arguing that the fuel pools should be used forever. Only until we can spend more time reviewing this decision and perhaps waiting a few years to get paperwork done on another site in a better location, away from the corrosive ocean, earthquake faults, tsunami risks, a super freeway, rail line, and 8.4 million people.

One obvious alternative is moving the waste to the Palo Verde nuclear plant in Arizona near Phoenix, a plant partially owned by SCE. It is already approved as a waste storage site, and so the paperwork would be minimal. Other options exist that need to be considered. Camp Pendleton. Mojave desert.

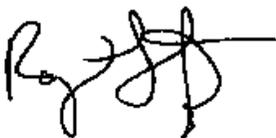
“Consolidated Interim Storage” are sites where the spent fuel can be stored on an interim basis and it may be only a few years off in regions that are begging for the spent fuel and the jobs it represents. All we need do is delay a few years to take advantage of these options, and do some paperwork to get need licenses. That is almost no time compared to the potential that this site may start to leak, and contaminate the ocean all up and down the coast.

**We need your help. If you are an official, please send a letter of opposition to the Coastal Commission, California Energy Commission and the Governor.** Please contact the attorney firm of Aguirre & Severson LLP to coordinate, particularly if you want to either join the case or get your input into the docket. **Concerned citizens, please join us at the trial in a very respectful manner, as the court is moving in our direction. We must stop this insanity.**

Need more information? Please visit this page: <http://citizenoversight.org/StopNukeDump>  
I'm also attaching the lawsuit, but if you don't see it, it is also found on that website.

Even if you came out in support of this project in the past, don't let that stop you from helping us stop this permit so we can find a better place for this extremely deadly waste material. Erase your mind of preconceived notions and SCE propaganda. A beachfront nuclear dump is insane.

Sincerely,



Raymond Lutz, MS Engineering  
National Coordinator, Citizens' Oversight Projects