

“NUCLEAR ILLINOIS” FACTS

Reactors:

- Illinois has more nuclear reactors than any other state -- 14 total; 11 operate, 3 are closed permanently (Dresden 1, Zion 1&2) due to contamination and facility degradation. All are owned or operated by Exelon Generation, the largest private nuclear power company in the U.S.; and Ameren Corp.
- If Illinois were a country, we'd be the 12th largest nuclear power in the world, tied with China
- ComEd's parent company Unicom merged with PECO electric in Pennsylvania in 2001 to form Exelon -- putting 24 of 103 U.S. reactors under one large, extended corporate umbrella
- Exelon has announced plans to build new nuclear reactors in Illinois and Texas, if given permission by government regulators. They have been granted an “early site permit” application from federal regulators for the Clinton reactor site near Urbana/Champaign
- Exelon has received 20-year extensions of the operating licenses for its aged, decrepit Dresden 2&3 and Quad Cities 1&2 reactors – historically among the oldest, most fined, poorest performing reactors in the nation; and plan to seek extensions for others
- At normal airliner cruising speeds, Illinois reactors (and their much more vulnerable “spent” fuel pools) are between 6-28 minutes from O'Hare Field - the world's 2nd busiest airport – a fact of great significance in the post-9/11 world.
- In case of a serious nuclear power accident *anywhere* in the U.S., Illinois reactors could be assessed as much as \$140 million/year for 7 years to finance resulting liability payments
- Illinois reactors have been fined by the NRC over 100 times, for nearly \$8.5 million for violations of federal regulations and poor operating practices.
- According to a December 3, 2003 report by the GAO, Exelon's Dresden 1 and Zion 1&2 Illinois reactors will not have sufficient funds accrued in trust to cover “expected baseline” costs of closure (reactor “decommissioning”). Five of Exelon's non-Illinois reactors will have insufficient funds. If economic forecasts are wrong, Dresden 2&3 and Quad Cities 1&2 may also have insufficient funds. Taxpayers and ratepayers -- *beware!*
- According to *Crain's Chicago Business*, because of utility de-regulation, Illinois nuclear utilities received \$6-\$11 billion in “stranded cost” recovery payments because of excessive nuclear reactor construction.

- While ComEd lobbyists fought *for* such “stranded cost” recovery in the Illinois Legislature, they *bitterly and repeatedly opposed* legislation to establish a “renewable energy portfolio standard” (RPS); and after joining a voluntary state RPS program in 2004, ComEd/Exelon withdrew in 2005.
- ComEd/Exelon received a rate increase in 2007 of ~24%. By buying electricity from its affiliate Exelon Nuclear, some of this money will be used to support new reactors.

Radioactive Wastes:

- Illinois produces more “spent” nuclear fuel (“high-level” radioactive wastes, HLRW) each year than any other state. Exelon reactors have produced >8,000 tons of “spent” fuel to date, all stored onsite at each reactor.
- In 2007 Exelon announced plans for the premature “decommissioning” – tear-down and removal -- of the shuttered, contaminated Zion nuclear reactors on the shore of Lake Michigan. The economic collapse put this plan on hold.
- Illinois has the only de facto high-level radioactive waste storage site in the country -- the General Electric Morris Operation in Morris, Illinois, which holds 772 tons of “spent” nuclear reactor fuel
- Illinois is usually among the top 5 US producers of so-called “low-level” radioactive wastes (LLRW) each year
- Annually over 99.3% of the radioactivity from LLRW generated in Illinois comes from Illinois 14 nuclear reactors.
- As of July 1, 2008 the nation’s only operating LLRW facility at Barnwell, SC, will close its operation to out-of-state customers, precipitating a potential LLRW storage crisis.
- In 2007 General Electric and Argonne National Laboratory bid on contracts to “reprocess” irradiated (“spent”) nuclear reactor fuel as part of the federal government’s Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) program.
- Radionuclides are migrating underground from burial trenches onsite at a closed low-level radioactive waste dump at Sheffield, IL.
- According to a 2009 DOE report, if “spent” reactor fuel shipments begin to the proposed and flawed Yucca Mt., Nevada radioactive waste repository, Chicago would see 25% of all rail shipments (~2,400 casks on ~800 trains) and 54% of all truck shipments (>1,400 trucks) pass through the area.

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