

California Radiation Monitoring

SUMMARY

- There is inadequate radiation monitoring in California, especially near the nuclear power plants.
- Timely radiation data is not available to the public in California.
- The Department of Health has nine radiation monitors around the state, including San Clemente and San Luis Obispo. However, they do not provide timely or adequate information to the public and the systems are very outdated.
- Citizens in the local area have no idea what the actual radiation levels are near the nuclear plant and the utilities have not been very forthcoming with the data and definitely not in a timely fashion. These plants leak radiation on a regular basis and we have no idea how safe we are. Relying on the utilities to self-report does not protect the safety of Californians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ask California elected officials to require installation of an EPA radiation monitor near both California nuclear plants (San Clemente and San Luis Obispo). This might be the quickest way to improve radiation monitoring.
- California is ultimately responsible for the safety of its citizens. An improved radiation monitoring system in California is critical.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides near real time radiation monitoring information to the public on their [RADNET](#) website. However, they do not have a radiation monitor within about 50 miles of the San Onofre nuclear plant and within about 150 miles of the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant. The closest monitors to San Onofre are in San Diego and Anaheim. The closest monitor to Diablo Canyon is Bakersfield. Outreach efforts to the EPA have not been successful. EPA requires that request come from the state of California.

The EPA provides inadequate radiation monitoring and attempts are being made to lower EPA radiation safety standards. See Dan Hirsch's 10/31/2011 presentation to the EPA, "Concerns Regarding Radiation Protection Standards in a Post-Fukushima Era." The section about inadequate EPA monitoring starts on Slide 71. Dan Hirsch is President of the Committee to Bridge the Gap.

The California Department of Public Health Radiologic Health Branch provides radiation reports from nine locations, including San Clemente and San Luis Obispo. However, information is months old and is not posted with any regularity. Their current equipment does not have the capability to provide near real time radiation monitoring similar to the EPA's RADNET system.

Southern California Edison (SCE) has monitoring stations at San Onofre, but will not share current data with the public. History has shown they are not very forthcoming with the data and they do not share it timely. For example, San Onofre reactor Unit 3 had a radiation leak on 01/31/2012. SCE's initial report said there was no radiation released. Then they said there was just a "little bit". The NRC report was issued almost three weeks later and the self-report amount was listed as an "estimate". See page 6 of [NRC Management Directive 8.3 \(2/16/2012\)](#).

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) said each state is responsible for radiation data in their state. The NRC publishes annual reports using self-reported data from the licensees and the sampling is very limited.

Additional information is available on the SanOnofreSafety.org website.