PRESS RELEASE AND MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Risky Restart say Public at NRC Meeting on San Onofre

NRC, Edison to Face Concerned Public at Today's Meeting in Dana Point

Adjudicatory Hearings Demanded to Ensure Safety

EVENT DETAILS:

Event: Rally / Press Conference
Date/Time: Tuesday, October 9, 2012, 5pm.
Location: St. Regis Monarch Bay Hotel, 1 Monarch Beach Resort North, Dana Point, CA 92629
Patio to the left of the main entrance
Speakers: Ray Lutz, CitizensOversight.org (MC)
NRC meeting panelists (who must leave at 5:15 p.m. for NRC briefing)
   Gene Stone, of R.O.S.E. and San Clemente Resident
   Cathy Iwane, resident of Japan during Fukushima disaster
   Don Mosier, Del Mar City Councilmember and Scripps Institution Scientist
   Grace van Thillo, Resident of San Clemente
   Torgen Johnson, Professional Urban planner and Solana Beach Resident
   Ace Hoffman, Nuclear Industry Watchdog and Author
   Chrystal Coleman, Vista Resident and concerned mother
   Gary Headrick, San Clemente Green

Event: NRC Meeting
Date/Time: Tuesday, October 9, 2012, 6pm.
Location: St. Regis Monarch Bay Hotel, 1 Monarch Beach Resort North, Dana Point, CA 92629
Audio Stream: 1-888-989-4359; pass code 1369507.
The webcast and phone bridge will be one-way only. Questions or comments can be submitted to the NRC staff after the meeting at: OPA4resource@nrc.gov.

Oct 9, 2012 (SAN ONOFRE) – Experts and oversight groups are astonished by the proposal by Southern California Edison to restart the Unit 2 reactor and run it at 70% capacity, putting millions of residents at risk of another emergency shutdown and radioactivity release to the environment.

The public will rally and sponsor a press conference in opposition to continued operation of the San Onofre nuclear plant at 5:00 p.m., October 9, just prior to the 6:00 p.m. public meeting conducted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) at the St. Regis Monarch Bay Hotel, 1 Monarch Beach Resort North, Dana Point, California.

The citizen coalition opposes Edison's proposed re-start of the defective Unit 2 at San Onofre and demands a full, transparent Adjudicatory Hearing and License Amendment process, including evidentiary hearings with sworn testimony and cross-examination which includes experts independent of the NRC, Edison and the nuclear power industry. This public meeting is NOT a proxy nor a substitute for this
process. Given the emergency shutdown and the serious loss of faith by the public in the NRC and Edison as a result, the coalition can see no reason why all 5 NRC Commissioners would not want this as well.

"The suggestion that the Unit 2 reactor can be restarted throws safety under the profit bus," said Carol Jahnkow of the Peace Resource Center of San Diego. "They are rushing to restart this unsafe reactor to keep the revenue stream flowing from rate-payers. Edison's safety plan to restart San Onofre is to watch for radiation leaks"

A study [3] conducted by nuclear industry expert Dan Hirsch of the Committee to Bridge the Gap and a lecturer at University of California at Santa Cruz will be presented which clearly shows that all steam generators at San Onofre have experienced similar devastating wear during their first few months of operation. Most new steam generators have zero tubes damaged after the first refueling cycle while San Onofre has 1600 and 1800 tubes damaged in the Unit 2 and Unit 3 reactors, respectively.

According to Hirsch, the steam generators in the two reactors exhibit almost identical severe wear patterns. There is no basis to assume that the Unit 2 steam generators are safe to operate at any power level.

"Why is NRC avoiding an investigation?" asked Gary Headrick of San Clemente Green. "If they restart one of these dangerous reactors without the appropriate Adjudicatory Hearing and License Amendment, that would be a violation of the trust we put in our regulatory agencies."

The recent NRC Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) report pointed out that "major design changes" in the steam generators (such as changes in the stay cylinder, tubesheet, tube support plates, and the shape of the tubes) were not considered changes that impacted safety because they were not explicitly mentioned in the "Updated Final Safety Analysis Report" (UFSAR). If they are not explicitly mentioned in the UFSAR, the NRC assumes the design can be changed without limit and still maintain safety. Unfortunately, these details were likely left out of the UFSAR because the original designers never contemplated that the steam generators would ever be replaced.

"Clearly, the steam generators were not like-for-like replacements. If the NRC still says there were no significant changes, then we know the regulatory agency has stopped regulating," said Ray Lutz, an engineer with Citizens' Oversight.

Edison will be shuttling employees to this meeting to try to "push activists to the back of the room" but the reality is that three to five times more jobs will be available in the renewable energy sector, and the activist community is not anti-labor.

"Edison’s plan to restart Unit 2 safely is to watch for radiation leaks, that's not a safety plan," said Donna Gilmore of San Onofre Safety. "That's a nuclear experiment. Restarting San Onofre with the the most defective steam generators in the nation is a recipe for nuclear disaster. We just went through nine months without any nuclear power -- why take the risk when we don’t need the energy?"

Edison Chair Theodore F. Craver, Jr. admitted that it really was his decision alone to decommission the plant, and that it would be the most difficult decision of his career. The decision to decommission could be made immediately, regardless of NRC processing and inquiries. Continuing the effort to restart the plant will either mean that NRC will look the other way and allow the unsafe plant to restart at reduced power, ignoring the fact that experts agree that this will likely only exacerbate the rattling steam generators, or
spending a great deal of money to replace the steam generators once again, with no guarantee that these will work either.

The underlying agenda of SCE, the plant operator, was to “super-charge" the steam generators, essentially upgrading the plant to produce more power without NRC or public approval [1]. SCE Engineers admitted in January that they worked to avoid NRC approval of the changes. In an article in Nuclear Engineering International: "the major premise of the steam generator replacement project was that it would be implemented under the 10CFR50.59 rule, that is, without prior approval by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC)" [2, emphasis added].

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References:

[2] http://www.copswiki.org/Common/M1252 -- "Improving Like-for-like RSGs" from Nuclear Engineering International -- Describes the many changes made to the steam generators to increase the steam energy developed.


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