

Coalition to Decommission San Onofre

PRESS RELEASE AND MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Symposium Decommissioning San Onofre and Dangers of high burnup nuclear fuel

October 16, 2013 (San Clemente, CA) The Coalition to Decommission San Onofre and the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter invite you to attend a community symposium where nuclear experts will discuss San Onofre decommissioning and nuclear waste issues.

Date: Saturday, October 19, 2013

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (news conference at 1 p.m.)

Location: [1201 Puerta Del Sol, 1st floor, San Clemente, CA 92673](#)

Cost: Free.

San Onofre nuclear reactors are permanently shut down. However, we are still at risk for a nuclear disaster from the tons of highly radioactive nuclear waste. This waste sits along our coastline and will remain there for the foreseeable future.

"We are safer since San Onofre shut down – but we are not safe." Gene Stone, Residents Organized for a Safe Environment (ROSE)

In June, environmental activists won a big victory when the troubled San Onofre nuclear plant ceased operations permanently. The current dispute over defective technology between Southern California Edison and Mitsubishi confirms how necessary this outcome was.

Environmental and citizen groups had only a short time to celebrate averting the risk posed by continued operation of the plant. Almost immediately it became clear that this site, wedged between Interstate 5 and the Pacific shoreline, poses a huge challenge of radioactive nuclear waste stored at the plant.

Much of the waste is a higher radioactive form of spent fuel known as "high burnup fuel," stored in densities far higher than original design specifications and more unstable than lower burnup fuel.

"San Onofre's use of high burnup fuel puts us at greater risk for a nuclear disaster. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has not approved a transport method for high burnup fuel¹ and says there is insufficient data to support storing it in dry casks for more than 20 years²." Donna Gilmore, SanOnofreSafety.org. See details at <http://sanonofresafety.org/nuclear-waste/>.

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¹ SFPO Interim Staff Guidance 11, Rev 3 Cladding Considerations for the Transportation and Storage of Spent Fuel 11/17/2003 <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/isg/isg-11R3.pdf>

² Dr. Robert E. Einziger, PhD, Senior Materials Scientist, NRC Division of Spent Fuel Storage & Transportation 3/13/2013 <http://1.usa.gov/15E8gX5>

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Large uncertainties persist about where the waste will ultimately be stored and for how long. Billions of dollars of taxpayer and ratepayer money will be required to resolve these uncertainties. The issues involved in "decommissioning" San Onofre were secondary during the shutdown debate but now they loom large.

Speakers at the Community Symposium include these nationally regarded experts.

Dr. Arjun Makhijani, President of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research -- an expert on Hardened On Site Storage of nuclear waste and long-term management of high-level waste.

Dr. Marvin Resnikoff, Senior Associate at Radioactive Waste Management Associates -- an international advisor to government, industry and environmental groups on nuclear waste management issues.

Dr. Donald Mosier, member of Department of Immunology, Scripps Research Institute, and Del Mar City Council member -- an expert on the public health effects of radiation.

The immediate goal of the symposium is to assure that "best practices" are applied to make the decommissioning of San Onofre as safe as possible and minimize both short and long-term risk to Southern California residents.

The ultimate goal of the symposium is to rejuvenate the national dialog about how the U.S. manages nuclear waste, including the safest on-site and remote storage options.

Co-sponsors of the symposium include the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter and the Coalition to Decommission San Onofre. The Coalition includes the Peace Resource Center of San Diego, San Clemente Green, Women's Occupy, Citizens Oversight Project, SanOnofreSafety.org, and Residents Organized for a Safe Environment.

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