

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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September 1, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Senator Michael Thibodeau, President of the Senate, and Representative Mark Eaves, Speaker of the House

**FROM:** Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner  
Department of Health and Human Services 

**SUBJECT:** State Nuclear Safety Inspector's May 2016 Monthly Report to the Legislature on the Interim Spent Fuel Storage Facility in Wiscasset, Maine

Legislation enacted in the spring of 2008 requires the State Nuclear Safety Inspector to provide monthly reports to the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Maine Yankee. The report focuses on activities at the site and includes highlights of the national debate on storing and disposing the used nuclear fuel. For your convenience highlights of local and national events are captured in the executive summary to the report.

The enclosed report provides the information required under Title 22 of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated §666, as enacted under Public Law, Chapter 539, in the second regular session of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Legislature.

Should you have questions about its content, please feel free to contact Mr. Patrick J. Dostie, State Nuclear Safety Inspector, at 287-6721.

MCM/klv

Enclosure

cc: Mark Lombard, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Monica Ford, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region I  
J Stanley Brown, Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation Manager, Maine Yankee  
David Sorenson, Senior Health Policy Advisor  
Sheryl Peavey, Director, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
Paul Mercer, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection  
Timothy Schneider, Maine Public Advocate  
Lieutenant Scott Ireland, Special Services Unit, Maine State Police  
Nancy Beardsley, Director, Division of Environmental Health  
Jay Hyland, PE, Manager, Radiation Control Program



State Nuclear Safety Inspector Office  
Maine CDC – DHHS

May 2016 Monthly Report to the Legislature

Executive Summary

The report covers activities at the Maine Yankee Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) facility, including the State's ongoing environmental radiation surveillance and provides updates on the national effort to license and construct a consolidated interim storage facility and/or a permanent geologic repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel. Maine's goal is to move the ISFSI waste stored at Maine Yankee to one of these facilities. The report's highlights assist readers to focus on the significant activities that took place both locally and nationally during the month.

Local

- The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued their inspection reports on the safety and security programs at Maine Yankee's storage facility in Wiscasset. There were no issues, deficiencies or violations.
- The State sent a letter to the NRC on Maine Yankee's exemption request from their current cask Technical Specifications which would force them in a very unlikely event to remove all the fuel assemblies from a cask within 30 days. Since Maine Yankee was decommissioned in 2005, it currently has no means to safely remove the spent fuel, transfer it and place it into a safe condition. Consequently, the State was supportive of Maine Yankee's request to allow them to return to their original cask loading specifications that would prevent such a situation.

National:

- The NRC published and released its Final Supplement to the Yucca Mountain Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The publication supplements the Department of Energy's (DOE) two EIS's that were prepared on the proposed Yucca Mountain repository. The NRC staff concluded that the potential radiological and chemical impacts on the aquifer and surface groundwater discharges were "small."
- The New Mexico Legislature overwhelmingly passed a Memorial that lent its support to the Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance to develop a Consolidated Interim Storage Facility for spent nuclear fuel near Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Introduction

As part of the Department of Health and Human Services' long standing oversight of Maine Yankee's nuclear activities under Title 22, Maine Revised Statutes (MRS) §666 (2), legislation was enacted in the second regular session of the 123<sup>rd</sup> and signed by Governor John Baldacci requiring that the State Nuclear Safety Inspector prepare a monthly report on the oversight activities performed at the ISFSI facility located in Wiscasset, Maine.

The State Inspector's individual activities for the past month are highlighted under certain broad categories, as illustrated below. Since some activities are periodic and on-going, there may be some months when very little will be reported under that category. It is recommended for reviewers to examine previous reports to ensure connectivity with the information presented as it would be cumbersome to continuously repeat prior information in every report. Past reports are available from the Radiation Control Program's web site at the following link: [www.maineradiationcontrol.org](http://www.maineradiationcontrol.org) and by clicking on the nuclear safety link in the left hand margin.

## Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI)

During May, the general status of the ISFSI was normal, with no instances of spurious alarms due to environmental conditions.

There were no fire- or security-related impairments for the month. However, there were five security incident reports (SIR) logged for the month. Two of the five incidents involved momentary losses of video signals. The remaining three instances involved the replacement of a radiation monitor. All five incidents required compensatory measures.

There were twenty-four condition reports<sup>1</sup> (CR) for the month and they are described below.

- 1<sup>st</sup> CR: Documented that the front gatehouse vehicle gate was not closing properly. Once the electrical breaker was cycled, the gate worked properly.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> CR: Documented that a set of keys was left in the Armory. The keys were retrieved some time later. Since the keys were locked in the Armory, there was no loss of control.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> CR: Documented that a fire extinguisher was overdue for hydrostatic testing. The extinguisher was replaced immediately.
- 4<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented a minor contact between a utility vehicle and a personal vehicle in the parking lot.
- 5<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented a possible procedure enhancement concerning Maine State Law on use of force.
- 6<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented a potential discrepancy in personnel TLD<sup>2</sup> results in 2015 as two individuals had readings higher than expected. The readings were being investigated along with an assessment of the TLD storage areas and the frequency of reading the TLDs.
- 7<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that the fence line radiation monitor system displayed an error message that it was unable to record as there was not enough disk space. The error message was cleared and the system returned to normal. The fence line radiation monitor system was replaced with a new system as noted in the three SIRs logged above.
- 8<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that a video monitor momentarily lost its video signal. A plan has been devised to replace the digital video recorder.
- 9<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that a video monitor momentarily lost its video signal. A plan has been made to replace the digital video recorder (DVR).
- 10<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented the results of the 2016 quality assurance audit on training program deficiencies.
- 11<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented the results of the 2016 quality assurance audit on the deficiencies in administrative controls.
- 12<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented the results of the 2016 quality assurance audit on various observations including areas for improvement.
- 13<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented the results of the 2016 quality assurance audit on various observations including areas for improvement. All items were addressed prior to the end of the audit and the CR was closed.
- 14<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that there was a broken electrical connector on a utility trailer. The connector was replaced.
- 15<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that the Armory Door alarm switch has intermittently failed to clear.
- 16<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that a video monitor experienced a temporarily lost of signal. A plan has been made to replace the DVR associated with this system.
- 17<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented a potential procedure issue regarding the guidance for a building evacuation during a fire. The guidance was removed during the 2015 procedure upgrade effort.
- 18<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that the incorrect revision of a procedure cover page was used. The cover page

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<sup>1</sup> A condition report is a report that promptly alerts management to potential conditions that may be adverse to quality or safety. For more information, refer to the glossary on the Radiation Control Program's website.

<sup>2</sup> Thermoluminescent dosimeters (TLDs) are very small plastic like phosphors or crystals that are placed in a small plastic cage and mounted on trees, electric utility poles, etc. to absorb any radiation that impinges on the material. For a further explanation, refer to the glossary on the Radiation Program's website.



was correct but showed the wrong revision at the top. This will be corrected at the next revision.

- 19<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that the Lincoln County Communication Center did not receive a radio transmission over Statewide Car to Car channel during a fire drill. The issue was believed to be with the Lincoln County's radio system.
- 20<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that a video monitor experienced a temporary loss of signal. A plan was made to replace the DVR associated with this system.
- 21<sup>st</sup> CR: Documented receiving an unusual letter in the mail. No threat was made to the facility. However, courtesy notifications were made to the Maine State Police and the NRC Operations Center. The State Police indicated that other facilities in the state had received similar letters. Connecticut Yankee and Yankee Rowe also received the same letter.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> CR: Documented that a procedure title did not match the procedure index and contained a misspelling. A procedure change request was generated to correct the issue.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> CR: Documented a video monitor experienced a temporary loss of signal. A plan was made to replace the DVR associated with this system.
- 24<sup>th</sup> CR: Documented that a window on a utility vehicle was broken due to weedwacking. A small rock was thrown through the window.

#### *Other ISFSI Related Activities*

1. On May 11, the NRC staff informed Maine Yankee that they had received Maine Yankee's April 14, 2016 letter requesting an exemption from specific licensing requirements of an independent spent fuel storage facility and that there was adequate information for them to perform their evaluation.
2. On May 16, the NRC issued an inspection report of their Region I security inspection conducted at Maine Yankee's Wiscasset site on April 19. The security inspection focused solely on Maine Yankee's security procedures and records, observations of physical barriers and detection system, reviews of compensatory measures and security training, selected interviews with site personnel, and Maine Yankee's response to the NRC's Part 37 regulations to physically protect highly radioactive sources from theft or diversion. No findings were identified.
3. On May 18, the NRC issued an inspection report of their Region I security inspection. The safety inspection covered the following programs - Radiation Protection, Emergency Preparedness, Fire Protection, Surveillance, Maintenance, Environmental Monitoring, Training, Quality Assurance, and Corrective Action. The inspection was comprised of observations, personnel interviews, and reviews of records and procedures. There were no violations or findings of significance.
4. On May 24, the State sent a letter to the NRC on their position on Maine Yankee's April 14, 2016 exemption request to the NRC. Maine Yankee expressed concern that a recent Technical Specification (Tech Spec) upgrade would compel them to off-load the entire contents of a cask of spent fuel assemblies should a situation arise whereby the average surface dose rates would exceed the Tech Spec and the design basis accident dose limits at the boundary of the owner controlled area. Maine Yankee postulated that it would take a very unlikely event, such as a "beyond" design basis accident, to force them into this situation. Since Maine Yankee was decommissioned in 2005, it currently has no means to safely remove the spent fuel, transfer it and place it into a safe condition. Because the State believed that the intent of the Tech Spec was to ensure that, when a cask was first loaded onto a concrete pad in the ISFSI, the cask surface dose rates would be within established criteria to meet the NRC's regulatory dose requirements. Additionally, due to Maine Yankee's inability to safely remove the cask contents, the State was supportive of Maine Yankee's exemption request to allow them to return to their original Tech Spec under the cask manufacturer's Certificate of Compliance's Amendment Number 2 to conform to their original loading specifications.

## Environmental:

The State received the first quarter results in mid-May from the field replacement of its thermoluminescent dosimeters (TLDs) around the ISFSI and the Maine Yankee industrial site. The results from the quarterly TLD change out continued to illustrate three exposure groups: elevated, slightly elevated, and normal. The two usual high stations were stations G and K with one extra station this quarter, F, all with an average of 24.6 milliRoentgens<sup>3</sup> (mR). Typically, station F is in the slightly elevated grouping. It should be noted that station K had one element with a slightly higher value of 29 when compared to the other five element readings of 23, 24, 24, 24, and 24. The vendor did not perform a statistical outlier test but the State did. The State found that it could reject the data point with 99% assurance. However, the State did not reject the data point since the result was not very different when compared to the other elements and rejection of the data point would not have changed its elevated grouping.

There were four stations in the slightly elevated group (E, J, L, and Q) with an average of 21.5 mR with stations M and O trading places by dropping down to the normal grouping this quarter. Fluctuations in the background are not unusual and are expected. These appear to be within the statistical boundaries of seasonal variations. There were ten stations (A, B, C, D, H, I, M, N, O, and P) in the normal group with an average of 20.1 mR for this quarter.

The Maine Yankee industrial site TLDs averaged 21.0 mR, which is comparable to the routinely expected background radiation levels of 15 to 30 mR for the coast of Maine. The industrial site TLD results exhibited the expected seasonal variations with the third quarter results being slightly higher than the previous quarter. Some of the stations have background levels that are highly dependent upon tidal effects, and local geology. However, virtually all the stations display some seasonal fluctuations that are affected by the out gassing of the naturally occurring radioactive gas, Radon. However, the first quarter experienced unusually mild weather with much higher temperatures than normal and lower snow cover than normal. However, the frozen conditions appeared to be enough to impede the Radon gas as the results exhibited the expected seasonal variations with correspondingly lower values.

Four years ago, the State initiated a program to use TLD controls to better quantify the individual impacts of storage and transit exposures on its environmental TLDs. Initially, the State focused on the transit exposure the TLD badges were exposed to. As part of this determination, the State typically returned these controls to the TLD vendor, Global Dosimetry in California, for an analysis of the transportation exposures. Over the last four years the State has acquired enough data on the transit badges to estimate an average of 6.5 mR for the expected transit exposure. Now that the State has some assurance of what the transit exposure is, it has shifted its attention to the final unknown, the storage exposure within the steel vault unit. All seven control badges will be used in the vault assessment. The exposure determination will take about 18 months to complete with the data evaluated every six months.

The field control TLDs at Ferry Landing on Westport Island, the Edgecomb Fire Station and the roof of the State's Laboratory read 23.0, 23.5, and 19.8 mR, respectively. Historically, the Edgecomb Fire Station value is higher than the Westport Island location.

As noted in earlier reports, the State maintains an environmental air sampler on the roof of the State's Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) for local or national events. The air sampler was extremely instrumental during the Fukushima event in Japan over three years ago in quantifying the levels of radioactivity that was coming from the crippled reactors. This year's first quarter results did not identify any unusual

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<sup>3</sup> A milliRoentgen (mR) is a measurement of radiation exposure in air. For a further explanation, refer to the glossary on the Radiation Program's website.



radioactive elements and were within historical ranges for both gross beta<sup>4</sup> and Beryllium-7, a naturally radioactive cosmogenic element that is produced from cosmic rays interacting with the nitrogen and oxygen atoms in the atmosphere. However, some data was lost for about a month when the old air sampler died. The air sampler was replaced with the purchase of a new unit. The available gross beta results ranged from 17.0 to 25.1 femto-curies per cubic meter (fCi/m<sup>3</sup>)<sup>5</sup>. A composite of the five bi-weekly air filter samples was used to measure the Beryllium-7's concentration of 71.8 fCi/m<sup>3</sup>.

For informational purposes Figure 1 on page 6 illustrates the locations of the State's 17 TLD locations in the vicinity of the ISFSI. The State's locations are identified by letters with the highest locations for this quarter as F, G, and K.

### Other Newsworthy Items:

1. On May 3-5, the Nuclear Energy Institute held its annual Used Fuel Management Conference. Topics included used fuel policy, consolidated interim storage, research and development opportunities, public outreach, change control, decommissioning strategy and experience, operational experience, technical and regulatory issues, international perspectives, license renewal implementation, transportation issues, used fuel management at shutdown sites, and spent fuel pool storage. For each topic area there were multiple speakers. The web link for the [agenda](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions. The individual presentations can be accessed at the following link: <http://www.nei.org/Conferences/Conference-Archives/Used-Fuel-Management-Archives> and downloading the zip file.
2. On May 4, DOE published an information fact sheet for its pending shipment of three vitrification components from the West Valley Demonstration Project in New York to the low-level radioactive waste facility in Andrews, Texas. The components were central to the solidification of high-level radioactive waste into glass logs from the reprocessing of commercial spent nuclear fuel. The components, (the Melter, the Concentrator Feed Makeup Tank, and the Melter Feed Hold Tank) were packaged into custom-built waste containers of six-inch thick steel walls containing between 77 and 3,354 curies of mostly Cesium-137 and Strontium-90. The packages were expected to be shipped by a heavy haul truck to a railroad transload station near the West Valley site and then loaded onto a railcar directly to the Waste Control Specialists' site in Texas. The fact sheet also highlighted such topics as inspections, shipment routing and tracking, and emergency response.
3. On May 5, the NRC published and released its Final Supplement to the Yucca Mountain Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The publication supplements the DOE's two EIS's that were prepared in 2002 and 2008 on the proposed Yucca Mountain repository. When NRC received DOE's license application submittal in 2008 it noted that, other than the two prepared by DOE, an additional supplement would be required for the groundwater effects in the Yucca Mountain aquifer beyond the distance that DOE initially analyzed. DOE deferred to the NRC to prepare the groundwater supplement. The NRC staff concluded that the potential radiological and chemical impacts on the aquifer and surface groundwater discharges would be "small". The peak annual radiation dose calculated for any of the evaluated locations was 1.3 mrem from pumping and irrigation at the Amargosa Farms, about twenty miles from the center of the proposed Yucca Mountain repository. The web links for the [news release](#) and the [EIS](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined texts and following the directions.

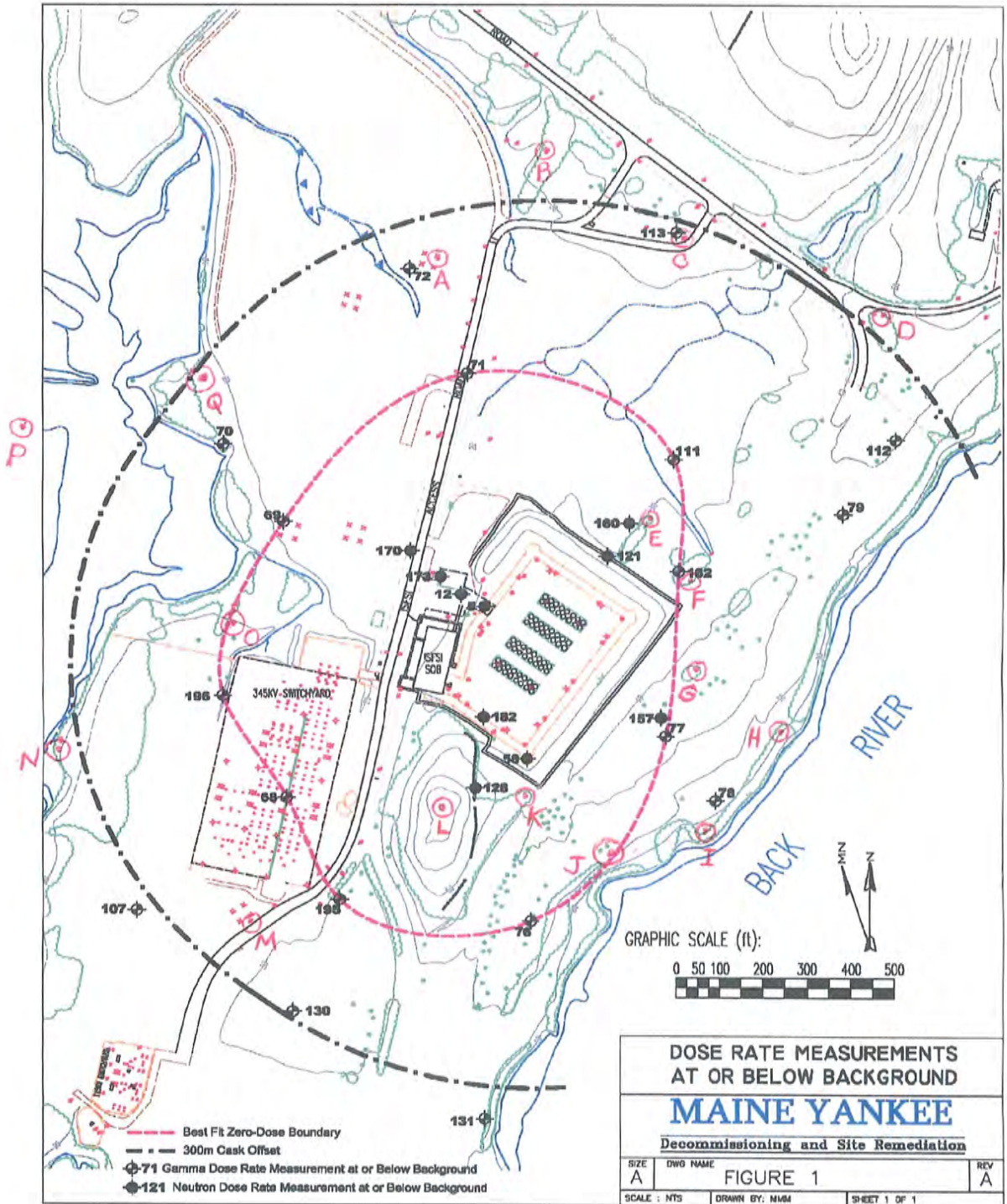
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<sup>4</sup> Gross Beta is a simple screening technique that measures the total number of beta particles emanating from a potentially radioactive sample. Refer to the glossary on the website for further information.

<sup>5</sup> A fCi/m<sup>3</sup> is an acronym for a femto-curie per cubic meter, which is a concentration unit that defines how much radioactivity is present in a particular air volume, such as a cubic meter. A "femto" is a scientific prefix for an exponential term that is equivalent to one quadrillionth (1/1,000,000,000,000,000).



Figure 1





4. On May 17, the Federal Claims Court Judge denied the Yankees' request to clarify the Judge's recent award decision that denied the costs associated with administering the three Yankee Companies' health and welfare benefit plans. The Judge's ruling restarted the 60 day clock for the appeals period.
5. On May 17, DOE responded to the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition's, and the Nuclear Energy Institute's February 2016 letter requesting financial information on the Nuclear Waste Fund. The DOE General Counsel noted that they have developed a reporting format that ensured consistent accounting principles utilizing book values since the inception of the Fund in 1983. DOE agreed that presenting financial information in a straightforward and simple manner would be beneficial to everyone concerned. The web link for the [letter](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.
6. On May 17-18, Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation and the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies held its fourth nuclear waste strategy and policy meeting at George Washington University on "Integration of Storage, Transportation and Disposal of Commercial Spent Nuclear Fuel." The discussion focused on the dual purpose canisters presently being used for storing spent fuel. Although the dual canisters are designed for storage and transportation, they are not designed for disposal and are much larger than the disposal canisters planned for geologic disposal. The current practice leads to three possible scenarios, namely, repackaging the dual canisters into disposal canisters, construct one or more repositories to dispose of the dual canisters, or leaving the dual canisters at interim storage sites and repackaging them every century. The current practice of larger canisters leads to suboptimal alternatives with increased uncertainties, logistical challenges for transportation and disposal, and longer cooling times before transportation and disposal. Although consolidated interim storage could provide some relief, it may precipitate other concerns such as the mechanical effects of repeated transportation and storage. The forum raised six questions that should be addressed to optimize a better integrated spent fuel management system. The link for the event can be found at the following link: <http://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/events/reset-us-nuclear-waste-management-strategy-and-policy-meeting-4-integration-storage>.
7. On May 18, Boston Edison Company, now known as NSTAR Electric Company, sued the federal government in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims over its continued obligation to pay for the storage of spent nuclear fuel at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station in Plymouth, Massachusetts.
8. On May 19, the Council of State Governments held a webinar on nuclear waste policy that discussed defining the problem and searching for solutions. The first presenter from the Georgia Public Service Commission focused on the politics of nuclear waste. He identified how many ISFSIs there were, how many reactors were in decommissioning, what consumers in each state have paid into the Nuclear Waste Fund, and the concerns over America's power supply challenge. He also mentioned that the annual cost of maintaining one ISFSI ranged from \$4.5 to \$8 million annually. With 60 ISFSIs nationwide that amounts to \$270 to \$480 million a year with the consumer paying sometimes three times for a disposal facility that still does not exist. The second presenter listed the number of reactor shutdowns over the last four years along with the reasons for their shutdowns, the market forces forcing the shutdowns, the lack of value ascribed to nuclear facilities, the quantities of spent fuel stored by State, the fourteen shutdown sites without operating reactors in 11 states, the Blue Ribbon Commission's position on consolidated interim storage, the congressional status in the House and Senate over spent fuel policy, the reasons for consolidated interim storage and a repository at Yucca Mountain, and the failure of politics on managing our nuclear stockpile. The web link for the [presentations](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.
9. On May 23, the NRC Chairman forwarded to the House Chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee his monthly status report of the agency's activities and use of carryover funds on the Yucca Mountain



Project. The report summarized what has been accomplished to-date and noted the staff's efforts to finish developing responses to public comments on the final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) supplement on groundwater impacts from disposal of spent nuclear fuel at Yucca Mountain. The report also revealed the loading of 3.692 million documents into the NRC's public library system, ADAMS, and the initiation of the indexing to allow searches of the Yucca Mountain documents in ADAMS. Of the \$330,795 expended in April, loading the documents in ADAMS cost \$77,380, while \$220,708 was spent working on the responses to public comments on the NRC's EIS groundwater supplement. The remaining expenditures involved \$30,661 to close out contracts, \$1,400 for program planning and support, and \$646 for wrap-up activities for the Yucca Mountain safety evaluation report. The web links for the [cover letter](#) and [report](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined texts and following the directions.

10. On May 23, the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board sent a letter to DOE's Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy offering several observations and recommendations on DOE's research and development activities on the performance of high-burnup spent fuel (HBF) during storage and transportation. The observations centered on the implications of long term dry storage on HBF as it relates to transportation, possible repackaging and eventual disposal after extended periods in dry storage and additional stresses in the spent fuel's cladding caused by the increase concentration of metal hydrides and higher internal fission gas pressures. The Board was concerned with the overall risk of the reduced ability of the cladding to stretch and the reorienting of the hydrides to make the cladding more brittle. The Board recommended that the research focus on the likelihood and consequences of HBF cladding failure during storage and under expected vibrational loads from rail or road transportation. The Board further recommended that DOE develop and test a model that would relate the behavior of unused fuel cladding to used fuel cladding. Finally, the Board recommended that DOE integrate the results from all the HBF research from university programs, national laboratories, and international research programs. The web link for the [letter](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.
11. On May 25, the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition held its spring meeting with a combination of presenters and panels. Presenters included DOE, nuclear industry officials, Senate staff on authorizations and appropriations, House staff on energy and commerce, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, and Vermont's Public Service Board Commissioner. Some of the topics included DOE integrated waste management activities on transportation and consolidated storage, existing consolidated storage and disposal projects and their legislative and DOE strategies, a senate staff panel on authorizations and appropriations, a proposed waste acceptance queue for shutdown nuclear power reactors, and a coordinated 2017 strategy that would include Yucca Mountain licensing with a consolidated interim storage pilot for shutdown plants besides waste management reforms. The presentation on a waste acceptance queue for shutdown reactors was noteworthy. Under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and DOE's standard contract with nuclear utilities, the sequence was based on the oldest fuel first. DOE's standard contract does not address the queue when it comes to shutdown plants. Some potential options included the oldest fuel first, closest plant to a storage facility, plant with the easiest access first, or plant with the least fuel first. The speaker advocated for the longest shutdown plant first and viewed that as the most efficient, equitable, and economical approach. If this approach was adopted, Maine Yankee would have all their 60 spent fuel canisters and four canisters with Greater Than Class C wastes removed from the Wiscasset site in the third year of such a national shipping campaign. The web link for the [presentation](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.
12. On May 27, the NRC staff issued its annual status report on its extended storage and transportation (EST) program. The EST program was initiated in response to NRC's 2010 efforts to update its Waste Confidence Rule on extended storage of spent nuclear fuel to address potential technical or regulatory issues over extended periods from 120 to 300 years. The EST program focused on the previously



identified technical issues such as stress corrosion cracking of a canister, fuel pellet swelling, thermal calculations, effects of residual moisture after normal drying, monitoring methods for dry cask storage, propagation of existing flaws in fuel cladding, low temperature creep of cladding, and concrete degradation. Since that time the staff noted that there has been extensive research by DOE and its national laboratories, the nuclear industry, academic researchers, and international activities on these technical issues. The NRC has established guidance for managing aging processes and the industry has responded in implementing aging management programs to timely identify, evaluate, mitigate, and institute corrective actions on the aforementioned degradation issues. Since the staff integrated the programmatic aspects of its EST program into its dry cask storage license renewal framework, the staff concluded that it can close its EST program without any adverse impact on safety, security, or environmental protection. The web link for the [report](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.

### Newsworthy Items Not Previously Reported

13. On March 7, the New Mexico Legislature passed a Memorial, entitled “A Memorial Requesting the Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance to Develop a Consolidated Interim Storage Facility in support of the Eddy-Lea Consolidated Interim Storage Project. The Memorial passed the both New Mexico House 50-17 and the New Mexico Senate 27-10. Memorials and resolutions do not require action by the Governor. The web link for the [memorial](#) can be accessed by positioning the cursor over the underlined text and following the directions.