



Radiation and Public Health Project

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GOVERNOR MUST ORDER QUARANTINE AT NUKE PLANT THREATENED BY COVID-19, BAN FURTHER RE-FUELING IN PA DURING PANDEMIC

Activists are calling for Governor Wolf to take immediate action after disturbing reports from Limerick nuclear plant workers near Philadelphia showed plant owner Exelon has violated social distancing standards, raising the risk of a new spike in COVID-19 cases.

"Based on reports from multiple workers, plus the diagnosis of a worker at the Limerick plant, we call on Governor Wolf to take several immediate actions," states Dr. Lewis Cuthbert, President of the Alliance for a Clean Environment in Pottstown, near Limerick.

1. Quarantine Limerick Workers. An immediate quarantine needs to be imposed for the 1,400 contractors at Limerick since March 27, violating social distancing standards at work, and living in local community homes, hotels, camp sites, and other locations.
2. Shutdown of Limerick 1 Reactor. Not adding fuel, the workers task, means Limerick reactor 1 (of 2) cannot operate, and should stay closed until the COVID-19 crisis is over.
3. Postpone Re-Fueling in Pennsylvania. The scheduled re-fueling of three other reactors in the state – at the Beaver Valley, Peach Bottom, and Susquehanna plants - in the next six months should be postponed until the crisis has ended.

An April 3 report from the Philadelphia Inquirer confirmed the first case of COVID-19 among the 1,400 workers. The Pottstown Mercury's April 4 issue provided information from workers speaking anonymously, fearful that Exelon would terminate their employment, that workers are "terrified" of working in a "breeding ground" and "a cesspool" for COVID-19. Descriptions of "people literally sitting on top of each other, no one enforcing social distancing" give further evidence of the law's violation.

To date, Congresswoman Madeleine Dean, State Sen. Katie Muth, and State Rep. Joe Ciresi have expressed concern for the health of workers and local residents, at a time when COVID-19 continues to surge in Pennsylvania and has yet to peak. Exelon, aside from a vague statement denying any problems at the plant, has been silent on the matter.

"All efforts should be made to limit the immense tragedy of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania," states Joseph Mangano MPH MBA, epidemiologist and expert on health dangers posed by nuclear plants. "Adding a large number of workers to the plant, even for just a few weeks, should not be allowed." Mangano is Executive Director of the Radiation and Public Health Project, and author of 37 medical journal articles and 3 books.

Claims that closing a nuclear plant, even for a few months, will leave local residents without electricity, are unfounded, as companies can and do purchase replacement energy. The 54 reactors in Japan during the Fukushima meltdown were all quickly shut, and only 9 have re-started, yet all energy needs of Japan have been met, for nine years.

References from newspaper articles:

https://www.pottsmere.com/news/workers-terrified-at-limerick-nuclear-plant-amid-coronavirus/article_934efb34-76a4-11ea-afbe-17495d88f209.html

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