

Radioactive Wastes from Nuclear Plants: from "disposal" to "recycling"

P.O.V. Essay: August 16, 2010 **By:** Gordon Edwards <CCNR@web.ca>
Subject: Radioactive Waste Gradually Disseminated into Everyday Items

During the early decades of the nuclear age, people were told (and are still being told) that all nuclear waste will undergo "disposal" -- a word with no scientific definition, for humans have never successfully "disposed" of anything.

But in recent years, the nuclear industry has significantly altered its previous doctrine. The new buzz-word is "recycling". The industry, it seems, wants to benefit from some of the "good vibes" associated with Environmentalism's "3 Rs" -- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

But recycling is a deceptive word to use, for the nuclear industry wants to gradually disseminate brand new highly dangerous waste materials -- radioactive species which never existed before -- into general circulation, as invisible contaminants.

These wastes, previously intended for permanent storage, are now intended to be shipped across lakes, oceans, and continents so that the companies who created them can lower their storage costs. They want to reduce the volume of waste by spreading it around, "decontaminating" it as they go.

But decontaminating is by no means perfect. Radioactivity has to go somewhere -- into the air, into the water, into the soil . . . and increasingly, into ordinary items of commerce.

Thus everyone on earth will soon be receiving their own personal allotment of radioactive plutonium, cesium-137, cobalt-60, iron-55, nickel-63, and many other human-made radioactive waste materials in their household purchases -- a gift from the nuclear industry.

The following text deals with a radioactive metal "recycling" facility in Northern England (Cumbria) that was licensed in February 2008 against

the wishes of many local inhabitants.

The plant is operated by Studsvik of Sweden.

Bruce Power's current plan to ship 16 radioactive steam generators, each the size of a school bus, through the Great Lakes, along the St. Lawrence River, and across the Atlantic Ocean to Sweden, is for the express purpose of having Studsvik make 90 percent of the contaminated metal available for "unrestricted use". [See <http://ccnr.org/index.html#sg>]

Gordon Edwards.

Selected quotes from the following press release from Cumbria:

“To call the process 'recycling' is disingenuous and most people understand that the radioactivity is merely redistributed over a wider area on the one hand and concentrated on the other.”

“At an international conference in Stockholm in 2007 'Coping with Nuclear Waste' Studsvik's 'solution' to the 'recycling of nuclear waste' was universally criticized with the resolution from conference delegates – all experts in their fields.”

“We call on the nuclear industry to keep radioactive waste materials isolated from humans and from the biosphere, and keep it out of commerce – so that it does not end up in our water, or in toys, cars, buildings, roads, zippers, tableware, etc.”

“We call on Studsvik (Sweden) and Ecomet-S (Russia) to halt all nuclear melting and mixing of radioactive metals for release into the open metal market.”

<http://www.getnoticedonline.co.uk/news/general-news/appeal-to-inspector-over-studsvik-lillyhall-site.html>

Appeal to Nuclear Installations Inspectorate over Studsvik Lillyhall site

Friday, 05 June 2009

Radiation Free Lakeland (RFL) has appealed to the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate not to grant final consent to Studsvik UK for their Lillyhall site.

Radiation Free Lakeland can be found here:

<http://web.mac.com/mariannebirkby1/Web/Radiation%20Free%20Lakeland/Radiation%20Free%20Lakeland%20.html>

A letter has gone to Mike Weightman, Director and HM Chief Inspector, Nuclear Safety Directorate and HM Nuclear Installations Inspectorate.

RFL say they understood that the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will be requested to give final consent for the receipt of contaminated metals onto the Lillyhall site – the first of its kind in Europe.

The latter says: “The plant, which will create only 30 jobs at the most, was first granted a Nuclear Site License by the UK Health & Safety Executive in 2008.

“The final consent to contaminate the Lillyhall site will be detrimental to yet another part of Cumbria previously clear of the nuclear industry and an area which has a growing diversity of businesses.

“The diversity of businesses has however already been affected by the presence of Studsvik despite a vigorous PR campaign by the company involving Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Red Squirrels.

“To call the process 'recycling' is disingenuous and most people understand that the radioactivity is merely redistributed over a wider area on the one hand and concentrated on the other.

“This concern was reflected in the vocal but ignored opposition from local residents, businesses and councillors.

“The rush to be seen to be ‘decommissioning’ in order to pave the way for new build has resulted in an undemocratic process that has carried Studsvik along this far.

“At an international conference in Stockholm in 2007 'Coping with Nuclear Waste' Studsvik’s 'solution' to **the 'recycling of nuclear waste' was universally criticized** with the resolution from conference delegates – all experts in their fields.

“We call on the nuclear industry to keep radioactive waste materials isolated from humans and from the biosphere, and keep it out of commerce – so that it does not end up in our water, or in toys, cars, buildings, roads, zippers, tableware, etc.

“We call on Studsvik (Sweden) and Ecomet-S (Russia) to halt all nuclear melting and mixing of radioactive metals for release into the open metal market.”

“Studviks own literature boasts:

'Studsvik has sold 15000 tonnes to the free release scrap metal market worldwide'.

<http://www.studsvik.se/files/product/Studsvik-UK-MRF.pdf>

“This is not acceptable to the rest of Europe and should not be acceptable here in Cumbria. Radiation Free Lakeland urges the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate not to grant final consent for the contamination of this site.”

Studsvik UK say the site will process materials and waste contaminated with low levels of radioactivity, which will be brought to the site in specially designed transport containers of similar appearance to normal industrial shipping containers.

Their website explains that typically, around two or three containers will be transported to and from the site each week....