



NEW ENGLAND COALITION ON NUCLEAR POLLUTION

15 years of selected events
and accomplishments
1996-2011

People who have served to help NEC include more than this writer can recall: witnesses and speakers include and are not limited to Dave Lochbaum, Paul M. Blanch, Joram Hopenfeld, Peter Bradford, Paul Gunter, Ian Goodman, Marvin Resnikoff, Arjun Makhijani; attorneys Jim Dumont, Phoebe Mills, Evan Mulholland, Jon Block, Jared Margolis, Shems Dunkiel Kassel & Saunders PLLC, Ray Shadis, pro se; Friends include: Clay Turnbull, George Harvey, Dave Pyles, John Greenberg, Sally Shaw, Leslie Staudinger, Peter Van der Does, John and Patricia Shadis, and so many more.

Donors include everyone and then some. Please dig deeply now.

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History in italics represents background information.

We are grateful to Gary Sachs, unaffiliated, who can add compilation of this history to his list of priceless volunteer gifts: go-fer at PSB hearings, die-in organizer, fearless fundraiser, late night co-conspirator, agitator and gadfly.

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1996

Whistleblower Michael Mulligan came forward opposing VY and its operations. NEC provided the support for the allegations.

NEC board member Cia Iselin stated "Now it seems clear that the NRC and courts are failing us utterly."

Michael Daley (NEC office manager 1984-1990, Energy Van educator 1990-96) becomes NEC lobbyist.

1997

NEC brought cable separation issues to light.

David Pyles becomes office manager. Brought experience working former Lab Supervisor West Valley, the only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing facility in US.

David oversees purchase and retrofitting of NEC's third incarnation of an energy van bringing "The Great New England Energy Show" across the northeast. (First energy van being Cia's 1962 P100 Postal Van, second van was Michael Daley's Toyota Pick-up truck)

The state nuclear engineer had some background work to do after a shooting rampage by a former VY temporary worker.

The legislature's begins discussing deregulation of utilities (and utilities in Vermont remain regulated).

\$750,000 bequest by anonymous donor.

1998

Professor Dr. Judith Johnsrud elected to NEC board.

Big White Energy Van known for burning bio-diesel sports roof mounted 1 kW PV array, 4 kW output made its debut Hudson River Clearwater Revival.

Sells Ben & Jerry "Peace Pops" toward fundraising. (June)

1999

The proposed sale of VYNPC to Amergen began. Michael Daley does most of the heavy lifting, attending PSB hearings.

2000-1

NEC opposed the proposed sale to Amergen. Jim Dumont represents NEC.

Docket 6300- sale to Amergen - denied by VT PSB.

Docket 6545 PSB is opened. NEC, CAN, CLF and others oppose the sale of VYNPC to Entergy of Louisiana. Jim Dumont continues to represent NEC.

2002

New England Sustainable Energy Association sells trailer to NEC to assist with our outreach work. (May).

Mark Skinder, a teacher by degree, becomes new Education Director and takes over all bookings for Energy Van.

Transfer of ownership to Entergy from Vermont Yankee Power Corp. (July 31)

NEC announces commitment to oppose the big three of Entergy:

- (1) Power Uprate - increased output from BWR to maximize profit with out of state sales of power (20%, the maximum allowable by law, or 540 Mw to 620 Mw.)
- (2) Dry Cask Storage- Fuel pool was never designed to hold 4 decades of waste. Entergy would lose full core offload capacity if they did not win dry cask storage permission.
- (3) License Extension - for 20 years beyond its approved license (ends 03/21/2012). During the sale case Entergy lawyers agreed to abide by VT regulations.

David Pyles resigns as office manager (Oct) and becomes festival manager at SolarFest.

2003

Peter Alexander is named first executive director of NEC.

Public Service Board (PSB) Docket 6812 extended power uprate case begins (February). NEC wins \$52,000 after Entergy is sanctioned for "corrosive and bullying behavior." The timeframe for the decision on power uprate is delayed 5 months.

NEC calls for Independent Safety Assessment of Vermont Yankee, and advocates for ISA to Vermont legislature and elected officials in other states. NEC gathers 10,000 signatures during an ISA petition drive.

2004

Jon Fishman of renowned Vermont musical group Phish joins NEC Board.

Entergy gets slammed by the PSB over Entergy's "bad attitude." PSB quoted NEC in calling for an independent engineering assessment. In the end, a "Comprehensive Vertical Audit" was mandated by the legislature.

NEC raised significant safety and reliability issues that turned Entergy's attempt at a "quick" permit process into a 1-1/2 year long legal battle. NEC took Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff to task for lies and misinformation about Entergy's proposed reactor boost by appealing directly to NRC commissioners and by causing an official investigation by that agency's Office of Inspector General.

NEC and many allies brought more than 550 people to the public "uprate information meeting" in Vernon (March 31).

NEC becomes intervenor in NRC case opposing ENVY's uprate. (February 20)

PSB approves uprate; some contentions raised by NEC raised included. (March 15; NEC files motions and appeals related to the uprate through April 2006).

NEC files to keep VY fuel on site. (April)

NEC established VT's first "whistleblower's hotline."

After the loss of fuel rod pieces, NEC put pressure on the NRC to perform a full audit of spent nuclear fuel at ENVY.

NEC formally intervened before the NRC and was granted a hearing on two important safety contentions related to Entergy's proposed power boost at VY.

NEC blocked Entergy from constructing two huge “temporary buildings” at the Vernon site. Entergy was sanctioned \$85,000 in fines.

NEC kept the nuclear issue front and center during the 2004 campaign season.

ClayTurnbull joins NEC as volunteer and event coordinator.

NEC's Energy van under the leadership of Mark Skinder reached nearly 150 thousand people at schools, events, and educational field trips providing people a safe alternative to nuclear power.

2005

Noel Paul Stookey in Concert, powered by energy van. (February 26)
Vermont Energy Partnership is formed by Entergy to spin support for VY and the uprate.

Entergy threatens to close VY (March).

Transformer fire burns on the outside wall of the turbine building. A second fire also burned inside the building (June). NEC sent pictures by insider.

Mark Skinder leaves NEC to open Green Solar Store.

Dry cask storage docket 7082 opens at PSB with NEC as intervenor.

NEC holds first Nuclear Institute at School for International Training. 9 workshops offered.

2006

Entergy files for license extension with NRC. (January 25). NEC intervenes; State of VT adopts NEC's contentions (June). (NRC decision: March 2011).

PSB issues its final decision related to uprate hearings. Two conditions are set. (1) According to Senator Peter Welch (D-Windsor), PSB found that the deal alone did not provide adequate economic best interest to the state. As a condition to the uprate, Entergy agreed to pay \$20m into state coffers for a renewable energy fund, thereby creating an “economic benefit.” (2) An Independent Engineering Assessment must be done. (March 15)

NEC called for clarifications of the IEA. NEC requests Independent Safety Assessment. NRC rejects IEA.

Cracks are found in reactor during outage. (April 17). Fuel rod pieces are determined to be missing (April 22).

NEC files for VY fuel to stay on site (April 23).

NRC uprate hearings begin (May). NRC is blasted at a public hearing attended by 500 people, including NEC members, who call for an Independent Safety Assessment.

Act 160 is passed. It grants that "the public service board shall obtain the approval of the general assembly legislature approval" prior to granting a Certificate of Public Good for construction of new nuclear power plants, or re-licensing of existing plants. The plant must be found "to promote the general welfare." This is the first time a state has given itself such power. (May 18)

PSB Docket 7082 dry cask approved. Concerns of NEC included. (June 4)

Lost spent fuel rods are found (July). A hot shipment left VY not cleaned of radioactive debris and was received at Susquehanna nuclear reactor (Pa.).

2007

The spectacular cooling tower collapse. A confidential informant took a photo of the collapse, and passed it on to the NEC after Entergy publicly understated the impact. The release of the photo by NEC marked a turning point in public opinion and remains one of the most widely published image in the fight to close VT Yankee. (August 21)

Reactor scram caused by a stuck valve. Entergy chose to "tap it with a mallet". (September)

2008

PSB Docket 7440 on 20 year license extension begins; NEC is intervenor.

NEC and VT Yankee Decommissioning Alliance (VYDA) co-sponsor 9 educational speaking events around the state.

The crane carrying the first load of high level nuclear waste from the fuel pool towards dry cask loading experienced a brake failure and dropped its

100,000 pound payload 4 inches onto the refueling floor, high above the spent fuel pool. The crane had not been tested for 25 years. (May). After NRC oversight of repairs from cooling tower collapse, many of the "fixes" were found to be failing. NRC staff sent to oversee the repairs; could not see the inside of the cooling tower, so unable to fully oversee the fixes. (How does one oversee without being able to see? July). Bad brackets on the fiberglass reinforced plastic columns in those cooling towers (see what blind oversight gets you? September). Excess radiation at reactor - 25 workers temporarily evacuated (September).

2009

ASLB closes the book on three years of litigation with a ruling that all safety contentions raised by NEC had been satisfied. NEC set important safety precedents such as a more thorough analysis of high energy piping (thinning and corrosion), reactor steam dryer integrity, and metal fatigue in reactor internal components. (July)

NEC files a Petition for NRC Review focusing on failures in metal fatigue analysis. NRC postpones review. NEC Petition overshadows VT Yankee license renewal.

VT Supreme Court hears arguments on appeal of VT Yankee's permit to increase river water heated discharge. NEC is represented by Evan Mulholland and Phoebe Mills.

Entergy admitted it neglected to monitor the dry casks for radiation. This was one of the conditions of dry cask approval in 2005. (August)

ASLB responds to a filing made by NEC in 1970s!

Entergy management and spokespeople state to legislature and PSB that there are no pipes carrying radionuclides anymore. "We used to have a pipe. It has now been capped. We consider this issue closed." (September. This led to the end of Entergy careers for the former site Vice President and the liaison director. The former director of nuclear safety assurance lost his title and position.)

2010

President Obama promotes the nuclear renaissance and announces \$8 billion in loan guarantees for two new Georgia reactors. (February 16)

Vermont Senate votes 26-4 against granting Vermont Yankee a license extension, under Act 160. (February 24). In the months prior to the vote, NEC members and staff testify to legislative committees.

Docket 7440 (license extension) put on hold based on Senate decision. PSB opens Docket 7600 regarding tritium leaks at ENVY; NEC as intervenor.

NRC confirms that tritium, cobalt 60, zinc 65 and other radioisotopes leaking. (January). Leaks continue through winter. NRC finds Entergy out of compliance with minimal industry standards for groundwater protection (April). Entergy admits strontium-90 contamination found. (May)

PSB denies Entergy corporate spin off of old plants into 'Enexus' (June).

NEC petitions Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) regarding Entergy's lack of an adequate aging management program to address the effects of moist or submerged safety related cables and pipes that are below grade, underground, or hard to access. (August). NRC asked Energy to re-evaluate whether its plan for managing aging of underground or buried pipes is adequate.

Seabrook applies for re-licensing, 20 years prior to its expiration date. NEC joins groups petitioning NRC to amend the rule regarding how early a license renewal application may start. It is currently 20 years before the current license expires; groups advocate the rule be changed to 10 years before the expiration of the operating license or combined license currently in effect (August)

Back to VY: NEC files testimony of Ray Shadis and Paul Blanch in PSB Docket 7600, petition by groups to cease operations due to tritium leaks (September).

NRC staff, Entergy and NEC swap motions and counter-motions on ASLB case re: Vermont Yankee license extension.

NEC hosts delegation of two Norwegian and eight Russian activists, legislators, nuclear scientists and government officials on a week-long, statewide decommissioning study tour. Funding is provided by Norway NGO and the Center for Safe Energy (Berkeley, CA).

NEC co-sponsors decommissioning forum in Brattleboro with CAN and Safe & Green. Ray Shadis presents the Maine experience. NEC co-sponsors decommissioning forum in Greenfield.

Senator Peter Shumlin of Windham County wins election as Governor. His platform included closing Vermont Yankee: "they leak, they lie, and they cannot be trusted." (November)

Chairman Jaczko of the NRC comes to Brattleboro to give lip service to the people who oppose VY. Ray Shadis testifies on behalf of NEC. (July 14)

The President's BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION on nuclear waste storage holds a public hearing in Wiscasset Me. NEC attends to support Friends of the Coast. (August)

2011

Fairewinds Associates, consultants to the legislature, report that a new independent cost study on the costs of decommissioning is needed because the previous report was authored by a company owned by Entergy. (January). (Fairewinds.com - an excellent source of Japan information)

VT Environmental Court ruled that groundwater is the property of the state of Vermont, a public trust resource. Agency of Natural Resources reopens Vermont Yankee's discharge permit process.

In a conference call, NRC Commissioner Jaczko announces approval of Vermont Yankee's license extension. Jaczko states: "There are a variety of permits and actions that are required for this facility to operate. The NRC's action today is just one piece of that." (March 10)

Earthquake and tsunami in Japan cause loss of power to Fukushima nuclear reactors. (March 11)

NEC, Safe & Green and CAN co-sponsor vigil at gates of Vermont Yankee to honor Japan (600 attend, March 20) and co-sponsor "Countdown to Closure Forum" marking one year until shut down (150 attend, March 21).

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