To: Jim Mehl, ERSIS Manager

From: Zack Clayton, Rad Coordinator

Subject: December Monthly Report

Date: January , 2016

Beans

Training:	0
Drills:	0
Meetings:	0
Technical Assistance:	3
Public Assistance:	0

Web Page Views: There were XX page views in December.

Radiological Safety Program Pages: http://epa.ohio.gov/derr/ersis/er/rad.aspx

Coming Attractions

Facility updates

Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station

Davis-Besse operated at full power for the month.

Perry Nuclear Power Plant

Perry operated at full power for the month.

At approximately 1 PM December 15, the Perry Nuclear Power Plant inadvertently discharged 130 gallons of bleach to Lake Erie. This discharge exceeded the plant's discharge permit limits. The plant reported this release to Ohio EPA NEDO as an NPDES violation. There was no report to the spill hotline.

Perry reduced power the weekend of December 19. This is usually for control rod adjustment.

Beaver Valley Power Station

On December 3, 2015 at 2107 [EST], the Control Room Emergency Ventilation System (CREVS) was declared inoperable due to a higher than allowed identified in-leakage rate for the Control Room Envelope (CRE) when in the Normal Operating Mode. Both Unit 1 & Unit 2 remain at 100 percent power and they share a common CRE. This condition could prevent the fulfillment of the safety function of a system that is required to mitigate the consequences of an accident, thus satisfying the reporting criteria for 10CFR50.72(b)(3)(v)(D).
The CREVS was set to recirculate mode while the issue was resolved, isolating the control room from outside air. See Event Number: 51584.

Beaver Valley Unit I

Unit I operated at full power for the month.

Beaver Valley Unit II

Unit II operated at full power for the month.

DTE

Fermi II

Fermi II came to full power on December 2, and operated at full power for the month.

Fermi III

Fermi III continues as a documentation evaluation.

Portsmouth Enrichment Plant

Activity

12/3	IREP Tech call. Discussion of RadResponder drill and webinars for the national drill in December and follow on drills in January/February.
12/3	IREP NPPG Review of the initiatives, agency updates, and plant updates. New calendar information for exercises and training. Coordination of plans to sample for background at farms and sites near the plants.

12/8 RadResponder Data Quality Drill Information Webinar. This drill is only to test meter readings at one meter gamma. It should work toward establishing a background level as measured by the instruments in use. No contamination surveys, lab samples, or observations are requested. Equipment information must be in the database for any particular meter use.

12/14 Received an allegation of improper storage and disposal at a warehouse subsequently demolished and rebuilt into a fitness center in Cincinnati. The report was “several bags of radioactive dust” that were still in the building at demolition. Referred to ODH for further investigation. See IPIR 1512-31-2633

12/15 National RadResponder Data Quality Drill. 8 am to 6 pm EST. Background readings were taken with a Ludlum 2241-3 meter with a 44-38 probe, and entered into the RadResponder data base with both the computer and Android mobile app.

12/17 Ohio EPA received questions regarding improper disposal of Plutonium filters on air handling equipment. ODH investigated and determined that there was no violation or contamination.

Office Issues

Need to order Bluetooth kits and two 2241-3s for RAT.

Statistics, NRC Reports, News, and ADAMS References

Operating Power Levels

October

Date	BV1	BV2	DB	Perry	Fermi2	
1	100	100	100	100	75	Fermi2 Increasing power
2	100	100	100	100	100	
7	100	100	100	100	100	
14	100	100	100	100	100	
19	100	100	100	74	100	
21	100	100	100	85	100	
22	100	100	100	100	100	
28	100	100	100	100	100	
31	100	100	100	100	100	

Event Reports

Power Reactor	Event Number: 51584
Facility: BEAVER VALLEY Region: 1 State: PA	Notification Date: 12/04/2015 Notification Time: 01:33 [ET]

Unit: [1] [2] [ ] RX Type: [1] W-3-LP,[2] W-3-LP NRC Notified By: SAMANTHA BALDWIN HQ OPS Officer: MARK ABRAMOVITZ	Event Date: 12/03/2015 Event Time: 21:07 [EST] Last Update Date: 12/04/2015
Emergency Class: NON EMERGENCY 10 CFR Section: 50.72(b)(3)(v)(D) - ACCIDENT MITIGATION	Person (Organization): WILLIAM COOK (R1DO)

Unit	SCRAM Code	RX CRIT	Initial PWR	Initial RX Mode	Current PWR	Current RX Mode
1	N	Y	100	Power Operation	100	Power Operation
2	N	Y	100	Power Operation	100	Power Operation

Event Text

EXCESSIVE CONTROL ROOM IN-LEAKAGE IDENTIFIED

"On December 3, 2015 at 2107 [EST], the Control Room Emergency Ventilation System (CREVS) was declared inoperable due to a higher than allowed identified in-leakage rate for the Control Room Envelope (CRE) when in the Normal Operating Mode. Both Unit 1 & Unit 2 remain at 100 percent power and they share a common CRE.

"At the time of discovery, there is a reasonable expectation this condition could prevent the fulfillment of the safety function of a system that is required to mitigate the consequences of an accident, thus satisfying the reporting criteria for 10CFR50.72(b)(3)(v)(D).

"Actions to implement mitigating actions were immediately initiated in accordance with Technical Specification 3.7.10. CREVS has been placed in Recirculation Ventilation Mode, isolating the control room from outside air.

"The NRC Senior Resident Inspector has been notified of the condition."

*****

News

Toxic remains: Uniontown landfill Superfund site includes industrial, radioactive waste
By John Harper, cleveland.com
on December 02, 2015 at 7:32 AM, updated December 02, 2015 at 7:33 AM

UNIONTOWN, Ohio --Is the groundwater in Uniontown radioactive?
A former owner of the Industrial Excess Landfill in Uniontown testified in federal court that he accepted, among the household trash and industrial waste, capsules of plutonium from the U.S. military.
In addition to toxic volatile organic compounds like benzene and toluene, both known cancer -causers, government tests have found radium, thoreum, radium and tritium --all radioactive elements --in the landfill, which was added to the national Superfund list for toxic cleanup in 1984. But the U.S. EPA determined that the radioactivity was not above normal levels for the area.

Whether more radioactive compounds exist, and whether the toxic brew in the landfill has leached down into groundwater aquifers below, have led to repeated disputes in a decades -long struggle between the EPA and locals in the community of 2,800.
Cleveland.com is looking at the toxic legacy left by Akron's industrial boom, the waste factories dumped and the impact on the environment and population as the EPA tries to clean up toxic sites.
The EPA says the water near the landfill is contaminated, but poses no threat to any drinking water. Instead of a full Superfund cleanup, the agency has planted trees and plans to allow toxins at the site to naturally dissipate.
Drinking water is not at risk, the EPA has said, as Uniontown and surrounding communities are connected to North Canton's municipal drinking water supply.
The dump in Uniontown sits on top of a complex underground formation called a kettle. There are ridges on both the north and south edges, which send groundwater flowing in all directions. As the groundwater flows away from the landfill, it is spread to the east and west, according to the U.S. Geologic Survey.
After numerous assessments by the EPA and the survey, federal officials concluded in 2001 that radioactivity levels in the groundwater below the dump site met standards for drinking water.
In the same year, a federal judge found that claims about the plutonium eggs , made by former landfill owner Charles Kittinger, were "not credible." Based on that finding, the agency determined that the Uniontown landfill, while on the federal Superfund list, didn't qualify for a cleanup under the federal Superfund law, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.
The EPA removed 53 drums of toxic material from the site in the 1980s. The site was never fully cleaned up though and no permanent barrier was ever installed to separate the landfill from the groundwater below .
Chris Borello, one of the founding members of Concerned Citizens of Lake Township, thinks the EPA's testing method was flawed.The EPA used a test that examined historical samples of water flowing away from the dumpsite; Borello and Concerned Citizens of Lake Township think the EPA should have used a model that tested the composition of the mud in and around the dump.
"They used test methodology for treated, finished drinking water, not superfund water high in solids," Borello said. "There's no excuse in the world to justify what they did to us here."
Concerned Citizens of Lake Township cites a 2004 test conducted across the street from the Landfill that found plutonium levels over 3,000 times higher than normal.
In 2011, another independent test reported by the Akron Beacon Journal found hexavalent chromium, a cancer causing chemical, in the groundwater near the Uniontown dump.
The EPA has defended its tests as adequate."The recent groundwater testing was adequate for drinking water purposes and the groundwater did not require clean up action for radionuclides..." a 2004 U.S. Inspector General ombudsman report reads.
The EPA stopped testing in 2005 for many heavy metals and radioactive compounds and sealed 33 of the 54 wells used to test the groundwater. The agency could not be reached for comment.
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Fukushima radiation spreads off West Coast

Published: Friday, December 4, 2015

Radiation from Japan's 2011 Fukushima disaster is continuing to spread in the waters off North America, and contamination at previously known sites appears to be increasing, according to scientists.

The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is still leaking radioactive isotopes more than four years after several of its reactors melted down, said Ken Buesseler, a marine radiochemist with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Hundreds of tests of Pacific Ocean water have found trace amounts of cesium-134 within several hundred miles of the coasts of Oregon, Washington, California and Vancouver Island, while cesium-137 was found in low levels in nearly every sample tested. Volunteers began collecting the water samples on the West Coast last year (*Greenwire*, March 17, 2014).
"Despite the fact that the levels of contamination off our shores remain well below government-established safety limits for human health or to marine life, the changing values underscore the need to more closely monitor contamination levels across the Pacific," Buesseler said (Courtney Sherwood, Reuters, Dec. 3). – BTP
Source: http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2015/12/04/stories/1060028985
Note: Detectable cesium-137 has been released by every atmospheric nuclear test and by the Chernobyl melt down in Ukraine.
*****
Fukushima Cesium in the Pacific Ocean continues to be at safe levels. Woods Hole Oceanographic has released its latest data, and Ken Buesseler says tracking the plume is not difficult given modern, sensitive technology. If Cesium-137 is found by itself, then there can be no Fukushima contamination. If Cs-134 is also detectible, then it is due to Fukushima contamination. The highest Fukushima concentration in the most recent sampling is 1,600 miles west of San Francisco, at 11 Becquerels per ton of seawater. A Becquerel is one radioactive emission per second. This is 50% higher than the few locations along the Pacific coastline with the Cs-134 marker, but 10 times less than maximum levels found following post-WWII nuclear weapon's tests. Further, it is 500 times lower than US drinking water limits. Though quite harmless, Buesseler says these detectible levels do have scientific value, "…these long-lived radioisotopes will serve as markers for years to come for scientists studying ocean currents and mixing in coastal and offshore waters." On another note, Buesseler still believes that analytically-significant amounts of contamination are still being released to the sea by F. Daiichi.
http://www.whoi.edu/news-release/fukushima-higher-levels-offshore
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A new generation of nuclear plants may require revising outdated radiation standards, experts assert

Umair Irfan, E&E reporter
Published: Wednesday, December 9, 2015

An outdated model for health risks from radiation is hampering the nuclear energy industry, experts warn. They want rules that recognize new scientific findings to help speed the arrival of a new generation of fission power plants.
Nuclear energy's potential as a weapon in the fight against climate change remains contentious, however. Some climate scientists warn that it's going to be difficult to keep warming in check without a zero-carbon-emissions baseload power source to replace the nation's aging nuclear power plants (*ClimateWire*, Dec. 4).
Opponents argue that reactors take years to build, with each plant costing in the billions of dollars. Both of these problems are heightened by traditional safety worries about radiation.
In high doses, radiation is deadly, with effects ranging from burns to cancer to organ failure. However, much of the time and money involved in building a nuclear power plant goes toward keeping radiation in check at much lower levels, a practice that some scientists say is not supported by their research.

At issue is the "linear no-threshold" model for radiation safety, which measures the harm from high radiation doses and extrapolates in a straight line to zero, giving rise to the argument that there is no level of exposure below which radiation is harmless, let alone helpful.

The model emerged as a standard in the early days of the nuclear energy industry, when radiation's impact on health was uncharted territory.

"They basically said there was no lower radiation limit that wouldn't cause damage," said Carol Marcus, a professor of radiation oncology, nuclear medicine and radiological sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles, medical school. "As the years have gone by, you can imagine the amount of bureaucracy that's grown up to protect you from a single atom."

Marcus said the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which licenses and oversees safety in nuclear power plants in the United States, has become bloated from an unfounded fear of low-level radiation.

"In order to save their jobs and their funding, they invented a national crisis. 'My God, CT [computed tomography] scans are killing people!' And there's no data to support it," Marcus said.

Beneficial effects of low levels of radiation

There are several ways to quantify radiation. For the medical sector, the main unit is the sievert, a measure of the probability of cancer or genetic damage resulting from a quantity of ionizing radiation. One sievert is equal to 1 joule per kilogram of absorbed energy, though a millisievert (mSv), or one one-thousandth of a sievert, is the more practical unit.

More than 100 mSv of radiation exposure each year leads to a statistically significant increase in cancer risk. Around 500 mSv, you start to see symptoms of radiation poisoning.

On average, an American receives a radiation dose of 3.1 mSv each year from natural sources, according to the NRC. A chest CT scan results in a radiation dose of 7 mSv.

NRC requires its licensees to limit radiation emissions to 1 mSv above background radiation each year, and the annual limit for nuclear workers is 50 mSv. Even so, the agency pushes nuclear energy firms to keep radiation levels even lower under a standard known as ALARA, short for "as low as reasonably achievable."

Marcus said the science doesn't support these rules and a growing body of research seems to indicate that low levels of radiation may actually have health benefits, stimulating the activation of repair mechanisms that protect against disease.

In February, Marcus sent a letter to the NRC to ask it to change radiation protection rules under a regulation known as 10 CFR Part 20, which was last updated in 1991. She cited several studies that showed that low levels of radiation exposure actually reduced health risks.

Studies on atomic bomb survivors in Japan showed that low exposures to radiation reduced cancer risks below a 500-mSv threshold. A study of 400,000 nuclear industry workers across 15 countries showed a decrease in risk from all cancers.

Another analysis of 36,000 hyperthyroidism patients showed leukemia rates dropping among those treated with radioactive iodine compared to those treated with surgical thyroid gland removal. The radioactive iodine resulted in a dose of 130 to 140 mSv.

The mechanism behind this is uncertain, but Marcus said it is likely that low levels of radiation trigger cellular repair mechanisms without doing any damage, helping the body repair wear and tear from other sources like oxidation, chemical exposure or accumulated mistakes in the genome.

Marcus added that spurring the body to repair itself is one of the foundational principles of radiation oncology. Focusing radiation narrowly to a tumor kills off rapidly growing but fragile cancer cells while leaving healthy cells intact to heal the tissue.

Stricter radiation limits would hamper researchers and doctors who use radiation therapies since they would hit their annual limits earlier.

Regulators should therefore build their safety standards around the evidence instead of pushing for zero radiation exposure, according to Marcus. "The first thing NRC can do is throw out ALARA," she said.

'This is a controversial rule'

Mary Lou Dunzik-Gougar, chairwoman of the nuclear engineering and health physics program at Idaho State University, said the current radiation limits are too restrictive for the nuclear energy industry, adding time and costs to reactor designs and raising personnel costs.

"The regulations say that no nuclear facility can expose a person to a fraction of what people are exposed to living in the world," Dunzik-Gougar said. "We live in a radioactive world. If it was so dangerous, we would be seeing different effects.

"There has to be a sort of refocus on basing laws and regulations on what we actually know," Dunzik-Gougar added.

She noted that when it comes to health risks, air pollution is more dangerous than radiation. The World Health Organization attributes 7 million deaths to air pollution each year. As such, nuclear energy is a favorable option compared with dirtier fossil fuels. Meanwhile, coal-burning power plants actually pump more radiation into the environment than nuclear power plants since trace radioactive elements like thorium and uranium end up concentrated in fly ash waste. But these fossil fuel plants are outside NRC's purview.

"It's important that, if we're considering air pollution, to be realistic about what sources of power there are that can provide the power we need," Dunzik-Gougar said.

Maureen Conley, a spokeswoman for NRC, acknowledged that the linear no-threshold model for radiation was cautious. "This is a very conservative model that is necessary because while a dose-response relationship has been documented for high doses, there is not enough data on health effects at low doses to provide a definitive picture," she said, adding that every other nuclear regulatory agency in the world uses this framework.

She said the agency is taking Marcus' comments and similar petitions under advisement and is reviewing comments on the proposal for a new radiation rule. "This is a controversial rule," Conley said. "We're really only in the early phases of going through those comments."

The next step for NRC is to determine whether it will take action based on petitions to revise the linear no-threshold model for radiation safety. Conley said she could not estimate a timeline for this.

Twitter: @umairfan Email: uirfan@eenews.net

Source: http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2015/12/09/stories/1060029189

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toledoBlade.com

NRC DECISION

20-year extension gives Davis-Besse OK through 2037

Nuclear plant has 700 employees

12/9/2015

BY TOM HENRY

BLADE STAFF WRITER

OAK HARBOR —The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a 20-year extension to FirstEnergy Corp.'s Davis-Besse nuclear plant on Tuesday, ending more than five years of review for what the agency itself has described numerous times as a plant with a unique and troubled history.

The extension allows Davis-Besse to continue operating through April 22, 2037. The plant's original 40-year license expires April 22, 2017.

The plant has operated without major incident for more than 11 years.With 700 workers, it is Ottawa County's largest employer.

Davis-Besse is the nation's 81st nuclear plant to receive a 20-year operating extension from the NRC. The agency has not rejected any of the applications.

Sam Belcher, FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. president and chief nuclear officer, said Tuesday the company is committed to operating a safe plant.

He conceded the application, filed on Aug. 30, 2010, took "a little bit longer" than expected. The time for most other applications has been two to three years.

"But I think the rigor and thoroughness of the NRC is important," he said. "We had a couple of issuesthat took a little longer to understand the full ramifications."

The biggest challenge in recent years has been getting the NRC to sign off on the plant's containment shield building, a separate building that protects the reactor building from tornadoes a
nd other high-impact objects.

Cracks in it, attributed to ice wedges from the blizzard of 1978, have been studied by the NRC, most recently by its Washington panel of independent nuclear engineers called the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards.

All agree the shield building is strong enough to last through the license extension.

Davis-Besse can be seen from State Rt. 2 near Oak Harbor. After five years of review, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved a 20-year extension for the plant.

There was a temporary loss of coolant water in 1985 that came six years after the half -core meltdown of Three Mile Island Unit 2 near Harrisburg, Pa., the latter of which continues to be the worst nuclear incident on U.S. soil.

Harold Denton, a former NRC engineer who took control of the chaotic Three Mile Island scene under orders from then-president Jimmy Carter, told a meeting of nuclear executives in 2004 that Davis-Besse has had the second and third-worst brushes with disaster.

Davis-Besse's low point was the near-rupture of the plant's original reactor head in the spring of 2002.

A coalition of anti-nuclear groups opposed to the extension called the NRC's decision an example of the agency's systematic "rubber stamp" for license extensions.
"Davis-Besse is a contrivance of regulatory neglect and corporate welfare. Without the existence of both, it would be a fading road bump in the transition to a full-employment, safe energy future," according to Terry Lodge, a Toledo attorney representing Beyond Nuclear, Citizens Environmental Alliance of Southwestern Ontario, Don't Waste Michigan, and the Ohio Green Party.
The groups said they are seeking to invalidate license extensions through a lawsuit Beyond Nuclear has filed in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington challenging the lack of a national repository for spent reactor fuel.
Davis-Besse is along Lake Erie, about 30 miles east of Toledo.
The plant generates up to 908 megawatts of electricity, enough to power more than a million homes. FirstEnergy said the plant displaces more than 7.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, about the same amount of that greenhouse gas that is released by 1.4 million cars a year.
Davis-Besse has an annual payroll of nearly $65 million, with annual property and payroll tax payments of more than $6.3 million supporting schools, police and fire departments, and other services, the utility said.
Contact Tom Henry at:
thenry@theblade.com, 419-724-6079, or via Twitter @ecowriterohio.
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The Columbus Dispatch
Environment
Feds renew nuclear plant's license
Associated Press
Wednesday December 9, 2015 7:17 AM

TOLEDO —Federal regulators have extended an Ohio nuclear plant's license for another 20 years.
The decision announced on Tuesday will allow the Davis-Besse plant near Toledo to stay in operation until 2037.
The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has spent the past couple of years reviewing the plant's safety and operations records and its environmental impact.
The move was not a surprise after regulators said two years ago that there were no safety issues standing in the way of renewing the operating license.
The plant that sits along Lake Erie is run by the FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co.
Several anti-nuclear groups opposed the license renewal after cracks were found in the plant's concrete shell four years ago.
Plant operators said the cracks trace back to a 1978 blizzard and didn't pose a danger.
*****
NRC News, Office of public affairs, Headquarters
Press Release No. 15-082 December 8, 2015
CONTACT: David McIntyre, 301-415-8200

NRC Renews Operating License of Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant in Ohio

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the operating license of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station in Oak Harbor, Ohio, for an additional 20 years. Davis-Besse, located about 21 miles east-southeast of Toledo, has a single pressurized-water reactor. The renewed license authorizes the plant to operate through April 22, 2037. FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. applied to renew the license on Aug. 30, 2010. The NRC staff's review of the application proceeded on two tracks. A safety evaluation report was issued Sept. 3, 2013, and a supplement was issued Aug. 10, 2015. A supplemental environmental impact statement was issued April 24, 2015. These documents, as well as other information about the Davis-Besse license renewal, are available on the NRC website. The NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards also reviewed the staff's work.
Renewal of Davis-Besse's operating licenses brings to 81 the number of commercial nuclear power reactors with renewed licenses (two of those have since permanently shut down). Applications for an additional 13 renewals are currently under review. Information about these reviews can be found on the NRC website.
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NRC renews operating license of Davis-Besse nuclear power plant in Ohio
December 8, 2015
By PennEnergy Editorial Staff
Source: NRC

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the operating license of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station in Oak Harbor, Ohio, for an additional 20 years. Davis-Besse, located about 21 miles east-southeast of Toledo, has a single pressurized-water reactor. The renewed license authorizes the plant to operate through April 22, 2037. FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. applied to renew the license on Aug. 30, 2010. The NRC staff's review of the application proceeded on two tracks. A safety evaluation report was issued Sept. 3, 2013, and a supplement was issued Aug. 10, 2015. A supplemental environmental impact statement was issued April 24, 2015. These documents, as well as other information about the Davis-Besse license renewal, are available on the NRC website. The NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards also reviewed the staff's work.
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There was no **Fukushima Cesium** in North America's Pacific kelp forests in 2015. Kelp Watch is a scientific collaboration between Dr. Steven Manley (Department of Biological Sciences, California State University- Long Beach) and Dr. Kai Vetter (UC Berkeley and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory). Initiated in November, 2013, the project has tested Giant Kelp (Macrocystis) and Bull Kelp (Nereocystis). Sampling takes place from Baja California to Alaska. The data is compared to samples taken off the coast of Chile, which is used as a base-line reference. Their latest report (January-February, 2015) finds no Cesium-134, the "fingerprint" isotope for Fukushima contamination, in any of the samples. https://kelpwatch.berkeley.edu/

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☐ There is no **Fukushima contamination in Alaska's seafood**. State health authorities and the Food and Drug Administration say Alaska fish species found no Fukushima contamination in 2014-15. Misinformation spread online has caused much concern, said Marlena Brewer of the Division of Environmental Health, "I get calls from all across the country. I've even had international calls with concerns about Alaska seafood." Tests this past year were run by the FDA's Winchester Engineering Analytical Center in Massachusetts. Testing covered five Salmon species common to Alaska's waters, as well as Halibut, Pollock, Sablefish, and Pacific cod. Scientists had predicted that the peak of Fukushima contamination in Alaska's fish should be during 2016. http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/testing-finds-no-nuke-disaster-radiation-in-alaska-seafood/

*****

The "Babushkas" of **Chernobyl** are living long, healthy lives. More than 100 elderly women refused to evacuate from the government-mandated exclusion zone around Chernobyl in 1986. A few have died of strokes and other old-age complications, but most are still alive. They mostly subsist on homegrown foods, their few farm animals (mostly chickens), and what they can find in the woods near where they live. One woman said that starvation is what scares her; not radiation. Another says, "The exclusion zone is not a prison. In Kiev, I'd have died long ago, five times over. Every car releases the whole periodic table into the air, and you inhale that into your lungs." The Babushkas come and go as they please. Some even go to a lab with a spectrometer to have their radiocesium levels checked, but mostly out of curiosity. The lab technician says that radiation has its risks, but other problems - "socio-psychological factors" – are more dangerous. He adds that the Chernobyl Babushkas are actually outliving those who evacuated, saying "Quite simply, people die from anguish." http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/24/science/babushkas-of-chernobyl-finds-life-thriving-in-scarred-land.html?smid=nytcore-iphone-share&smprod=nytcore-iphone&_r=1

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Radioactive **Cesium in fish** near F. Daiichi dropped rapidly after the nuke accident. Jay Cullen of the research group *Fukushima InFORM*, summarized a detailed report co-authored by Japanese experts. The report examined the radiological content of numerous sea-species, as well as the benthic (ocean bottom) environment. Cullen lists five major points from the report: (1) the highest species' contamination was found nearest F. Daiichi, (2) most species quickly dropped below the 100 Becquerels per kilogram (Bq/kg) standard, (3) fish contamination decreased in parallel with the radiological releases, (4) bottom-feeding species' contamination dropped at a slower rate, indicating that contamination in benthic sediments remained constant, and (5) the benthic community populations are essentially unchanged relative to pre-accident levels.
http://fukushimainform.ca/2015/11/26/impact-of-the-fukushima-nuclear-disaster-on-marine-animals-along-the-coast-of-japan/ -- http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0265931X14002410 (Japanese report)

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Iitate village is testing the first Fukushima rural **radioactive waste incinerator**. They hope to start full operation in mid-December. The plant will not only burn decontamination and dismantled house materials from Iitate, but also rice straw and

pasture grass from five other communities, plus sewage sludge from Fukushima City, Minamisoma, and Kunimi. The Environment Ministry will operate the 240-tons-per-day facility for up to five years. The resulting ash below the 100,000 Bq/kg will be shipped to a landfill in Tomioka Town equipped with a seepage control system. Ash above the limit will be moved to a radioactive waste storage facility, yet to be determined.
http://www.fukushimaminponews.com/news.html?id=598
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Lisbon Morning Journal

Lisbon Also in: East Liverpool Review

FirstEnergy continues support of EMA

December 14, 2015
By TOM GIAMBRONI -Staff Writer (tgiambroni@mojonews.com),
Morning Journal News

LISBON -FirstEnergy Corp. will continue to provide the majority of funding for the Columbiana County Emergency Management Agency under a new contract approved last week by county commissioners.
The two-year contract requires FirstEnergy to provide $146,173 for the EMA in 2016 and $216,941 in 2017.
Under the current contract, the company was required to provide the EMA up to $234,000 this year, but Commission Chairman Tim Weigle said a $64,000 balance in that account will be carried over, which is why FirstEnergy's contribution will be lower in 2016.
The EMA is required to have an emergency response plan in the event of an accident at FirstEnergy's nuclear power plant in nearby Shippingport, Pa., which is why the company helps fund county EMAs that operate within 15 miles of the facility.
The EMA's only other sources of funding are annual grants received from the Ohio EMA -about $90,000 per year, under the contract -and a small contribution from commissioners: $7,345 in 2016, increasing to $7,492 the next year.
Prior to 2015, commissioners had never contributed to the EMA's operations but began doing so at the insistence of FirstEnergy. The current contract supposedly called for commissioners to begin contributing 2.5 percent toward EMA operations, starting in 2015, and increasing to 10 percent by 2017.
Weigle said commissioners contributed only 2.5 percent each of the past two years and it will remain at the same rate under the new contract. He said the contract did not specifically require the county to continue increasing its contribution until reaching 10 percent.
"It was kind of a suggestion, a proposal in the language," Weigle said. He noted that increasing the county's share beyond 2.5 percent did not come up in the negotiations this time.
The EMA's proposed budget outlined in the contract includes increased funding for salaries in 2016 and 2017, but Weigle said any pay increases are subject to approval by commissioners.

"Those are no guaranteed pay raises. When the time comes we'll take a look at that," he said.
Two years ago, FirstEnergy wanted a say in how much county EMA Director Luke Newbold was paid, which commissioners rejected. Newbold's $59,000 salary was the highest of the EMA directors in the Shippingport zone, and that was one of the reasons FirstEnergy wanted the county to begin providing some funding.
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Chillicothe Gazette

Piketon plant families share fears

Anxiety over 2016 funding may be resolved this week
Chris Balusik, Reporter
6:42 p.m. EST December 12, 2015

PIKETON—Three-year-old Aralyn Koehler is quick to tell you what scares her.
"I'm afraid of ghosts," she says in response to a question nobody's asked, with a smile that's hard to turn away from.
The only child of Garret and Leslie Koehler, Aralyn is too young to fear the Boogeyman that haunts her parents. They both work as radiological control technicians involved with the decontamination and decommissioning project at the former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, leaving the family's entire livelihood hinging on the project's funding over the next few days.
Dave and Sarah McClay are in a similar position.
Dave, a United Steelworkers safety representative, has worked at the Piketon site for 21years, while Sarah, involved with decontamination and decommissioning support in one of the process buildings, has been there 16 years. They have been trying to figure out whether their jobs are secure enough to allow for a trip to Disney with their child ren's high school band next year.
It's been a particularly rough few months for the two couples and the hundreds of other people involved in both the cleanup work and in the American Centrifuge Plant on the DOE site in Piketon. On the cleanup side, employees are waiting to see whether full funding to continue the work at current levels will be part of an omnibus budget bill that had originally had been scheduled for approval in Congress on Friday, but was being pushed back to the middle of the coming week so some final details could be worked out. On the centrifuge side, the wait is to see whether a de-funding decision by DOE to shift resources to Tennessee for continued work on the centrifuge technology will stick and result in widespread layoffs beginning next month.
WANTING SOME ROOTS
Garret Koehler came to Piketon six years ago on a five-month contract, which was followed by a couple of six-month contracts that had him living out of a suitcase for a year-and-a-half, and, by his own admission, not very happy. He finally decided to take a chance and, as he puts it, place some faith in the same Department of Energy that his father had worked for for 40 years in Idaho. He purchased a farm.
"After a while, I ended up putting down roots. We bought a small farm, I met my wife here, had my daughter, thought it was going to be a secure job that would maybe not

make it quite to retirement—we understand it's a D and D project—but we thought we'd get most of a career in," he said. "Every year I've been here, it's been concerns."
Like many other families spending time during the holiday season waiting for an annual resolution to the next year's funding for the project, the Koehlers have found they can't make long-term plans for their lives or their family.
"We definitely live our life a certain way because of that uncertainty," Garret Koehler said. "We own a farm, and we would absolutely love to expand that farm into something we could do for a living someday, but we're too scared to spend the money never kn owing if we're going to have jobs. We've just been through it too many times."
While no job is necessarily secure in today's world, having to undergo a nearly annual ritual in which WARN notices of pending layoffs arrive as regularly as Christmas cards and decisions about your future are beyond your ability to control creates stress, Leslie Koehler said.
"Having no security is a scary way to live," she said. "If a car breaks down or something, we have to look for used, something we can still afford to make a payment on."
"It doesn't feel safe ever," Garret Koehler said. "It does (influence how we choose to save). It has more to do with how we spend, is the way I would look at it. We try to keep our bills to a minimum and total net as low as possible because of it.
"We recently, every 'rad-tech,' for the most part, on the plant site took some kind of cut in pay and it was a sort of a significant cut in pay. We always know those things can happen, so we try to budget accordingly, just in case they happen again.
It's definitely frustrating, to say the least. "One of the family's biggest concerns is that should something happen to their jobs in Piketon, Garret would potentially have to go back to a life on the road to support the family.
"(Rad-techs) are typically moving out of state, or it's very common for the rad-techs, and we've discussed it because of the insecurity, 'Hey, should I go take this more secure job and you stay here and basically split up our family part of the time to try and put ourselves in the best position that we can for the future?' It's scary."
The couple definitely wants to have a secure plan in place by the time Aralyn reaches school-age.
"Like I said, it's typical for RCTs to move around the country to work outages, power plants, things like that," Garret Koehler said. "I never wanted that for my family, I don't want to be away from my family."
'ALL OUR EGGS IN THE SAME BASKET'
Dave and Sarah McClay consider themselves legacy stakeholders in the Piketon plant, who built their house and their lives on property located on Sarah's parents' family farm. They, too, fear the prospect of someday being placed into a situation of having to decide whether to travel to find work. With their longevity in the community, they have built a network of connections, family and friends over time, gleaned from involvement in Scouting, their children's school, Sarah's efforts on days off as a teacher's aid and other activities. Both 45 years old, they have three children, Chambers, 21, Charli, 18, and Chase, 14.
That longevity at the Piketon site, which the couple acknowledges has resulted in them placing "all our eggs in the same basket," has also bred something of an acceptance of the annual funding battle.

"The first couple of times we went through this, it impacts you greatly," Dave McClay said. "I won't say the most recent ones don't, but one thing I notice from at least our perspective and even some of the other employees is that it tends to breed apathy because everybody, once they've lived through this, think well, the savior will come and things will be fine at the last minute. Sometimes that does happen, and sometimes you find yourself on the layoff list."

The news of the defunding of the American Centrifuge Plant certainly broke that apathy, Sarah McClay said.

"That was a little blow to the gut," she said. "None of us was expecting that. At one point in time, I was thinking that could be a backup plan for me to go somewhere and finish out to my retirement years. Now that's gone."

The fact the federal fiscal year ends Sept. 30, coupled with the fact that wrangling over the next year's federal budget in recent years has extended through continuing resolutions into the holiday season, certainly makes Christmas spending an uncertain science, the couple notes.

"It does impact your holiday spending," Dave McClay said. "You either say I'm going to purchase whatever I'm going to purchase early and go ahead and try to get it paid for or you delay it."

The biggest dilemma this year, Sarah McClay added, was deciding what to do about following the band to Disney.

"We finally just decided we've been saving up the money anyway so we'll just go ahead and go and have a vacation next year whether we're laid off or not laid off and have at least one big hurrah," she said.

The frustration, Dave McClay said, comes in part from being asked as an employee to bring a vision for the future every day to work. That vision needs to be applied in the decision-making over funding as well, he said, quoting a parable that states "Without vision, people perish."

ACCOUNTABILITY SOUGHT

Herman Potter, president of United Steelworkers Local 689, which has union employees at both the cleanup and American Centrifuge sites, said what is really being sought is accountability on the part of a federal government that has made promises to the local area to get the site cleaned up for redevelopment.

"We hear on a daily basis on how our workforce needs to be accountable," Potter said. "To be accountable for our work, accountable for our integrity, accountability for cleaning up this mess and not getting into trouble, challenging your security clearance, being good stewards of the taxpayers' money. We hear that on a daily basis of how accountable we should be. The Department of Energy is not accountable and they don't believe they have to be accountable."

The site is very connected to Potter's family, with several members of his wife, Mary Beth's, family either having worked or currently working there, as well as both Potter and his wife's direct connections to the work there.

"We talk about it at family gatherings because we're a really close family and we get together often," Mary Beth said. "It would devastate us because our whole family's livelihoods have revolved around this place."

Potter hopes that as things shake out with the federal budget this week, the general impressions he has received about continued funding for the cleanup work and at least

a glimmer of hope on the Centrifuge site—although that is still a "toss up"—will come to pass.
If it does, he notes, then the worrying can begin for 2017.
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Cleveland.com

On Dec. 1, FirstEnergy Corp.'s three Ohio electric utility operating companies filed with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio a proposed settlement of a rate plan designed to keep the Davis-Besse nuclear plant near Toledo and the W.H. Sammis coal-fired plant on the Ohio River from shutting in the face of low natural gas prices.

Editorial

PUCO must oppose FirstEnergy settlement for Davis-Besse, coal plant bailout

By Editorial Board
on December 11, 2015 at 6:30 AM, updated December 11, 2015 at 2:06 PM

Here's the deal the Illuminating, Ohio Edison and Toledo Edison companies --part of FirstEnergy Corp. of Akron --want to offer ratepayers: in the near-term, pay more for electricity; in exchange, pay less in the long-term, at least according to FirstEnergy's math. The utility calls this an Electric Security Plan. It could also fairly be termed a Stockholder Protection Plan for FirstEnergy investors.
FirstEnergy says its latest proposal would, over eight years, "generate $560 million in customer savings." But an estimate commissioned by the Ohio Consumers' Counsel and the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council projects it "will cost consumers approximately $3.9 billion."
The seemingly endless litigation over FirstEnergy's proposal to have customers subsidize the continued operation of Davis-Besse and the W.H. Sammis coal plant has made allies of some unexpected companies and groups.
FirstEnergy's problem is that two of its big power plants--coal-fueled W. H. Sammis on the Ohio River and nuclear- company's share of two other coal-fueled plants generate power at greater cost than current market price, given cheap natural gas.
But, FirstEnergy argues, if natural gas prices rise, as the company expects, that might make power generated at Davis-Besse and Sammis a price-competitive alternative for FirstEnergy customers –but only if the plants haven't been shut down.
The Electric Security Plan would keep the plants open by requiring the Illuminating, Ohio Edison and Toledo Edison companies to buy all the power the plants produce, The Plain Dealer's John Funk has reported, "at whatever it cost to make, plus a profit for FirstEnergy Solutions, the unregulated subsidiary that now owns the plants."
So on Dec. 1, FirstEnergy filed a proposed settlement with the PUCO staff and 15 other entities.
Besides cutting to eight years the length of the plan, the proposed settlement also would commit FirstEnergy to cutting carbon emissions, expanding energy-efficiency programs and assisting low-income customers. Among supporters of the proposed settlement are the city of Akron and the Council of Smaller Enterprises.

The controversial FirstEnergy rate plan that includes subsidies for the Davis-Besse nuclear power plant and the W.H. Sammis coal-fired plant will get another round of hearings before state regulators.
However, as this board has editorialized before, the plan,in effect, penalizes consumers for management's previously mistaken expectations about energy markets.
Given that track record, it's fair to ask why FirstEnergy's projections of future energy markets should be any better. What FirstEnergy wants to do is based on suppositions that may or may not pan out, which is why the plan isn't a good deal for consumers, and why the PUCO should reject it.
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toledoBlade.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Don’t make consumers pay more for Davis-Besse

12/13/2015

I commend your Dec. 3 editorial “Get a better deal.” In addition to ripping off ratepayers, undermining climate protection, and disadvantaging energy efficiency and renewables, the FirstEnergy rate proposal is dangerous.
At the problem-plagued Davis-Besse nuclear power plant atomic reactor, there are health and safety concerns. The concrete containment building is not so slowly crumbling. Despite FirstEnergy’s snow-job assurances that shield building cracks revealed in 2011 would not get worse, growth was detected two years later.
For the first time, FirstEnergy has admitted that for four years it has known of the potential for an earthquake, tornado, or other force to cause large chunks of crack-loosened concrete to fall off the exterior of the shield building. Many vulnerable safety-significant structures, systems, and components are located below.
The company never mentioned such risks in public meetings, media statements, shareholder communications, and U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission filings since 2011.
The cracked and corroded containment building can’t be counted on to prevent a catastrophic radioactivity release, with unthinkable casualties and property damage downwind and downstream.
Ratepayers should not be forced to fund 20 more years of radioactive material at Davis-Besse.

KEVIN KAMPS
Takoma Park, Md.
Editor’s note: The author is a radioactive waste specialist at Beyond Nuclear, a national environmental group.
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The Press

Davis-Besse license renewed: Groups plan to continue opposition to nuclear plant

Written by Larry Limpf
December 14, 2015

A coalition of environmental groups has vowed to continue opposing the Davis-Besse power station after the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's decision last week to renew the station's operating license for another 20 years.

The renewed license authorizes the plant to operate through April 22, 2037. First Energy Nuclear Operating Co. filed an application in 2010 for renewal. The plant's original license was set to expire in April 2017.

The NRC issued a safety evaluation report in September 2013 followed by a su pplement in August of this year. A supplemental environmental impact statement was issued in April.

The coalition, including Beyond Nuclear, Citizen Environmental Alliance of outhwestern Ontario, Don't Waste Michigan and the Ohio Green Party were quick todenounce the renewal, calling it a "rubber stamp" and warning the extension will be largely funded –if approved by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio -by ratepayer subsidies.

"Davis-Besse is a contrivance of regulatory neglect and corporate welfare," said Terry Lodge, a Toledo attorney and the coalition's legal counsel.

First Energy management noted the company has invested almost $1 billion in the plant, including the installation of a new reactor head in 2011 and two new steam generators in 2013.

The plant is capable of generating 908 megawatts.

James H. Lash, executive vice president and president, FirstEnergy Generation, called the NRC decision a "key milestone."

"The license extension secures an important source of carbon-free power for our region while providing thousands of family-sustaining jobs and significant financial support for the community," he said.

Michael Keegan, of Don't Waste Michigan, called the regulatory renewal process a "rigged game" and questioned the adequacy of the NRC's analysis of problems at what is called the shield building that houses the reactor.

Last year, the utility company uncovered an air gap in the building's inner wall while the plant was offline and starting the process of replacing the two steam generators. The company attributed the flaw to work done in 2011 when the building had been cut to replace the worn out reactor head and then resealed.

The coalition points to similar problems at a reactor in Crystal River, Florida where the owner, fearing replacement of its container would cost billions, decided instead to shut down.

Beyond Nuclear has also filed a lawsuit in U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to challenge the NRC's policy covering the storage of spent nuclear fuel.

Oversight changes

Earlier this month, the NRC approved changes to the agency's process for subjecting a nuclear power plant to additional oversight and directed the staff to develop new guidance to help identify weaknesses in a licensee's performance.

The commissioners approved a staff recommendation to require three low-to -moderate safety significance (white) inspection findings or performance indicators to push a reactor into the "degraded cornerstone" category of regulatory oversight –called column 3 of the reactor oversight process action matrix. Column 1 represents a reactor

receiving normal oversight and column 5 is reserved for reactors ordered to shut down due to unacceptable performance.
The changes will take effect in January.
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Portsmouth Daily Times

Piketon funding included in Senate bill

First Posted: 9:38 am
-
December 16th, 2015
By Frank Lewis - flewis@civitasmedia.com
Employees at the Department of Energy reservation at Piketon have been keeping one eye on their Christmas plans and the other on Washington to see if that much-needed funding is going to be forthcoming to keep the two main projects alive.
On Tuesday, the Senate took at least a tentative step in the positive direction by including funding for Piketon in the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill being considered.
That's the word that came from U.S. Senator Rob Portman (R-Ohio) who said the Sen ate bill includes the funding needed to maintain current employment levels for the decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) work at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant and to maintain operation of the American Centrifuge Plant (ACP) in Piketon.
"I'm pleased that we were able to secure funding for the cleanup work at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant and the uranium enrichment work being done at the American Centrifuge Project in Piketon, Ohio," Portman said. "These projects are critically important not only to the southern Ohio economy, but also our national security. It is now up to the Department of Energy to fully utilize these funds and avoid layoffs on these two important projects."
While the powers that be are attempting to garner complete funding of the D& D project, and getting away from the funding that was from both appropriations and the open market sale of enriched uranium. Last year the bottom fell out of the uranium sales market.
Meanwhile, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz stopped the testing of the cascades at the ACP project, saying he believed the information from the spinning of the machines had basically reached diminishing returns status.
Recently, following the urging of Portman, Moniz authorized the DOE to provide resources to avoid involuntary layoffs for D&D activities at Piketon through the remainder of the year.
Reach Frank Lewis at 740-353-3101, ext. 1928, or on Twitter @franklewis.
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The Columbus Dispatch

Ohio senators push for Piketon uranium project

By Jessica Wehrman
The Columbus Dispatch

Thursday December 17, 2015 6:05 AM

WASHINGTON —The $1.1 trillion spending bill that Congress will vote on this week includes a stocking full of goodies for Ohio, but whether one of those goodies will turn into a lump of coal is to be seen.

Ohio lawmakers included $100 million for uranium enrichment and say they are confident that money will go toward the continued operations of the proposed American Centrifuge Plant near Piketon, in southern Ohio.

But the language doesn't indicate the money should go specifically to Piketon. The Department of Energy could use that money to pay to enrich uranium at a site in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz in September signaled his intention to use technology developed in Piketon in Tennessee. "We'll continue to work with the delegation to make sure the DOE honors its commitment to (the Piketon plant)," Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, said. "People shouldn't be alarmed. This is going to stay."

Separately, Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, has placed a hold on Obama administration nominee Victoria Wassmer until he receives assurances from Moniz that the money will be spent in Piketon.

The southern Ohio town —nestled in the midst of some of the counties with the highest unemployment in the state —faced a double blow late this summer, when the Department of Energy signaled its intention to stop the uranium-enrichment project just one month after the federal government ran out of money to clean up a nearby abandoned Department of Energy site.

On the latter, lawmakers have more certainty: The fiscal 2016 omnibus spending bill includes $225 million to pay for continued cleanup work at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon. The plant, which began operating in 1954, stopped operating in 2001.

The delegation has been united in fighting for both the cleanup and the new uranium enrichment site.

"These projects are critically important not only to the southern Ohio economy, but also our national security," Portman said.

The spending bill also included $38 million for Central Ohio Transit Authority's CMAX B us Rapid Transit line project. The transit line will link the northeast suburbs with downtown Columbus. The money is hoped to provide economic development along the corridor and help link 211,000 residents with major employment centers, medical facilities and educational institutions. Brown requested the money, calling COTA "one of the best transit systems in the state."

And it includes $50 million for security funding for the Republican National Convention, scheduled for next July in Cleveland as well as money aimed at protecting Lake Erie from harmful algae blooms in the Great Lakes.

The bill also included:

• $10 million above the president's request for Wright-Patterson's Air Force Research Laboratory's Human Effectiveness Applied Research program. The project conducts research intended to be used for systems that operate with minimal ongoing human direction.

• $10 million above the president's request for the Air Force Research Laboratory's Manufacturing Technology Program. The lab, Youngstown State University and the University of Dayton Research Institute are working on ways to increase the use of 3-D printing in the military.
• $6.6 million for a new satellite pharmacy at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.
• $4.1 million above the president's request for technology transfer activities. The money will help to commercialize technology developed by the Air Force Research Laboratory.
• $300 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a project aimed at protecting Lake Erie from toxic algae blooms.
• $9.4 million in funding for an upgrade to the indoor firing range facility at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station.
• $371 million for the research, development and purchase of 81 Stryker vehicles with an upgraded weapon system. Some of the work on the vehicle s is being done at the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio.
• $2 billion for the Hardest Hit Fund, a program that has distributed $570 million to Ohio since 2010 to help communities hit hard by blight. Brown secured the funding.
jwehrman@dispatch.com @jessicawehrman
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Chillicothe Gazette

Bill grants full Piketon cleanup funding
Centrifuge funding would remain at Energy Department's discretion
Chris Balusik, Reporter
7:04 p.m. EST December 16, 2015

PIKETON -While employees involved with cleanup work at the former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon can now breathe their collective annual sigh of relief, American Centrifuge Plant workers remain in a holding pattern waiting to see what the Department of Energy will do with its uranium enrichment money.
Members of Ohio's congressional delegation Wednesday hailed agreement on a 2016 omnibus spending bill that, if passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama, would fully fund decontamination and decommissioning work at the DOE site in Piketon. The bill contains $203 million for the cleanup and another $21 million toward construction of an on-site, low-level waste disposal cell that is expected to result in savings for the project by reducing the expense of shipping lightly contaminated waste off site.
Officials with Fluor-BWXT, the lead site contract for the cleanup work, expressed appreciation for the work of Ohio's congressional delegation in securing the 2016 funding.
"We haven't seen the actual language in the bill (as of Wednesday afternoon), but based on Sen. (Sherrod) Brown's announcement, we expect full support with this legislation and want to thank Sens. Brown and (Rob) Portman and Ohio lawmakers, including (Bill) Johnson, (Brad) Wenstrup and the other Ohio representatives, for having the confidence in our workforce to support this project," said Dennis Carr, site project director. "We'll make sure the cleanup moves forward safely and appropriately."

Both Brown and Portman said they are pleased funding could be secured for the cleanup and expressed hope for more consistent funding moving forward.
Portman's office noted that $50 million was also included in the bill for domestic uranium enrichment activities, with another $50 million in transfer authority available.
Spending of that funding, which could help keep operations at the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon going, is at the Department of Energy's discretion.
Should the DOE elect to continue along its present course of de-funding the Centrifuge and shifting resources for continuing development of the centrifuge technology to a facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, it has the authority to do so.
Since its contract with DOE expired Sept. 30, Centrus Energy has been footing the bill to keep Centrifuge operations going without job losses while efforts have been made to change the minds of those at DOE. An all -hands meeting of Centrifuge employees was conducted in Piketon Wednesday afternoon, after which American Centrifuge Vice President Steve Penrod sent a memo to all employees reiterating the risk that still exists and the hope that a change will occur.
"We are pleased with the outcome of this legislation, but the decision now rests with the Department of Energy on whether to exercise their authority to preserve the important capabilities and workforce in Piketon," the memo reads. "In the absence of a commitment from the Department (of Energy), we will need to begin demobilizing Piketon early next year. Obviously, we are doing everything we can to avoid that outcome, and will urge that the Department move quickly to restore the funding so that the important work in Piketon can go forward with no further uncertainty."
Penrod closes the memo saying that regardless of the outcome, he is proud of how the Centrifuge workforce has performed and that their work is important.
WARN notices of pending layoffs sent to Centrifuge employees in mid-November stated that layoffs could begin around Jan. 11 if conditions did not change. A spokesperson for Centrus Energy confirmed Wednesday the terms of those WARN notices remain in effect at the moment.
Brown, on a conference call with reporters Wednesday afternoon, expressed confidence that past experience working with DOE to preserve funding for projects will translate to a successful outcome for the American Centrifuge.
"We've learned how to work with DOE, we've learned how to get this funding, and most importantly, the workers in southern Ohio at ACP and the cleanup in Piketon have proven their worth, and the congressional delegation, all of us together in both parties, have been able to prove to DOE this is where these (jobs and projects) belong," Brown said. "We will continue to make that case and I'm confident we will win on it because we've won every single time on this."
U.S. Rep. Brad Wenstrup said support and advocacy from both leaders and community members across southern Ohio has played a crucial role in demonstrating how important continued funding of the projects is to the region.
The bill is expected to pass the House and Senate later this week. DOE did not immediately respond to a request for comment.
(USA Today reporter Deirdre Shesgreen contributed to this report.)
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For the first time in nearly three decades, the U.S. has produced the first plutonium-238, an isotope used to power space missions. The Department of Energy said Tuesday that

it had produced 50 grams of Pu-238 at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the first time it had produced the isotope since the late 1980s. Pu-238 is used in radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTGs) to generate power where solar panels are impractical. NASA is paying $15 million a year to restart Pu-238 production. [ORNL]
Note: Pu-238 is not the plutonium isotope used in weapons. It is unsuitable for that use.
Source: https://us-mg6.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=686i09g8eutom#4474477572
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Potentially contaminated Hanford equipment sent off site

Radioactive contamination found on air coolers in trunk of Kennewick car
State says levels found do not present public safety risk
No contamination found in coolers sent to Ohio, Pennsylvania

By Annette Cary
acary@tricityherald.com

The Department of Energy has checked for radiation contamination in three states after potentially contaminated equipment left the Hanford nuclear reservation.
Contamination was found at Hanford this past week in cooling systems used within protective suits worn by workers at parts of the Plutonium Finishing Plant that have high levels of airborne radioactive contaminants.
This week, Hanford officials discovered that another 11 of the cooling systems had been sent outside of Hanford for mechanical work in October. They were tracked to Kennewick**, Cincinnati** and Pittsburgh, DOE said.
Two of the systems that left the site were discovered to have radioactive contamination at such low levels that they were not considered a health concern, DOE said. Nine others shipped off site had no contamination.
Of the cooling systems still at Hanford, around 20 were found to be contaminated.
DOE has had issues with the spread of radioactive contamination since summer, as workers tackle high-hazard decontamination work at Hanford's Plutonium Finishing Plant in preparation for its demolition.
Doug Shoop, a DOE deputy site manager at Hanford, has called the plant DOE's most hazardous facility to be demolished.
Workers at the plant use protective suits with supplied air breathing systems that are new to Hanford. The puffy suits are filled with air to create higher pressure within the suit than outside it, protecting workers from airborne contamination. The air is cooled for worker comfort, but that is not the air they breathe.
Puffy protective suits are filled with air to create higher pressure within the suit than outside the suit to help protect workers from airborne contamination. The air is cooled for worker comfort.
On Dec. 10, radioactive contamination was found on the elbow of a worker after the suit had been removed. It was one of several incidents at the Plutonium Finishing Plant during the past six months, including incidents of skin contamination.
As the worker's equipment was examined, contamination was found on the outside of the suit's cooling system, called a vortex cooler. More contamination was found inside the cooler when it was taken apart.

The units are worn within the air-filled suits and are about the size of a shoebox.
CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation then decided to inspect all the vortex coolers used for the air-filled suits. When not in use, respirator equipment is stored by the Hanford Fire Department, which services and repairs it.
An initial check found that four of the units held by the fire department were contaminated, and all were shipped back to the Plutonium Finishing Plant. The contamination was stuck on the units and unlikely to be released into the air, but as a precaution the fire department facility and its workers were checked for any contamination. None was found.
DOE said about 20 contaminated coolers were found after all the coolers now at the Plutonium Finishing Plant were checked.
Monday, as Hanford officials critiqued the incident they learned that 11 of the systems had been given to a Mine Safety Appliances salesman in the fall to troubleshoot a mechanical problem. Because the units had left Hanford, the Washington Department of Health was called in, and it investigated.
The salesman, who works out of Kennewick, still had three of the coolers in the trunk of his car. One cooler was clean and two had fixed contamination.
The contamination was not “smearable,” said Earl Fordham, a deputy director for radiation protection for the Department of Health. It was at levels that fall below certain state requirements for controls.
At that level for fixed contaminants there is not a public health concern, Fordham said.
The salesman’s car, Kennewick house and a storage unit he used were surveyed for contamination and none was found, DOE said.
The salesman had sent eight coolers to a manufacturing plant in Cincinnati for a look at mechanical issues. Then they had been shipped to a Mine Safety Appliances office in Pittsburgh.
Health officials in those states were notified, and Hanford officials called in the DOE Radiological Assistance Program to help with investigations at the two sites.
Late Wednesday, a survey of the facility in Ohio was completed with no contamination found, DOE said. Thursday, a survey of the Pennsylvania office was done, finding no contamination on the eight coolers there or in the office.
There is no safety or health risk to workers, the public or the environment from these pieces of equipment.
Erik Olds, Department of Energy
“There is no safety or health risk to workers, the public or the environment from these pieces of equipment,” said Erik Olds, chief of staff for the DOE Hanford Richland Operations Office, in a statement Friday.
But “out of an abundance of caution, the department has offered to perform bioassays for employees at the Cincinnati and Pittsburgh facilities to monitor for potential exposures,” Olds said. Urine samples often are used for bioassays.
DOE plans an assessment at Hanford to look at whether standards were followed for allowing equipment to leave facilities and the site.
CH2M Hill has temporarily stopped high-hazard work at the Plutonium Finishing Plant both to look at the incident this month and the series of incidents over six months. High hazard work often is scaled back around Christmas at Hanford because accidents can increase when workers are distracted.

Workers are continuing non-hazardous work at the plant that focuses primarily on actions identified earlier to improve radiological safety at the plant in light of contamination incidents since July and safety improvements being developed in response to the most recent incident, according to DOE.
"The department takes this matter very seriously, and protection of human health and the environment is the department's top priority," Olds said.
Annette Cary: 509-582-1533, @HanfordNews
Source: http://www.tri-cityherald.com/news/local/hanford/article50600355.html
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Court allows utility to restart nuclear plants
Published: Thursday, December 24, 2015
Japan's second-largest utility was cleared by a Japanese court to restart four nuclear reactors.
The Fukui District Court overturned an injunction barring the restart of two reactors at the Takahama power station. The court also turned down a request for an injunction to block the restart of two reactors at the company's Ohi plant.
The ruling clears the way for Kansai Electric Power Co. to resume operations at the units in western Japan five years after the Fukushima Daiichi crisis.
Residents had argued that the company's restart plans for the Takahama power station underestimated earthquake risks and failed to meet new safety standards.
"Today's two rulings show a recognition that safety has been ensured at Takahama Nuclear Power Station and Ohi Nuclear Power Station," the utility said in a statement.
The utility said both plants may be online by February (Kentaro Hamada, Reuters, Dec. 24). **-- SP**
Source: http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2015/12/24/stories/1060030019
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Information Notices

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http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html
or to access generic communications files on the NRC Homepage:
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Part 21 and Miscellaneous

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INITIAL OPERATOR LICENSING WRITTEN EXAMINATION APPROVAL
(BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION – UNIT 2)
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Centrus Energy Corp. - Transmittal of Security Incident Log per 10 CFR 95.57(b) for American Centrifuge Operating, LLC.
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Fermi 1

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Fermi 2

SUMMARY OF TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALLS HELD ON AUGUST 4 AND18, 2015, BETWEEN THE U.S. NRC AND DTE ELECTRIC COMPANY CONCERNING THE BORAFLEX MONITORING PROGRAM PERTAINING TO FERMI 2 LRA (TAC NO. MF4222)
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Comment (7) of Vito A. Kaminskas on Behalf of DTE Energy Company on Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants Supplement 56 Regarding Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant.
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Fermi 3

No reports