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July 2021 Special Update

Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant

A Statement on the Shutdown of Indian Point Nuclear Plant from Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.

Indian Point has stood as a distinct landmark of the lower Hudson Valley for the past half-century. It has provided the region with jobs and energy, all while posing a potential risk to the people of the region. Now, after it has served its time, its reactors go quiet.

After the events of 9/11, it became apparent that Indian Point could be an extremely dangerous target for terrorism. Had the plane from Boston gone down 60 seconds sooner and aimed at Indian Point's unprotected fuel pools, we would have truly seen a Fukushima scale disaster — or worse — on the Hudson.

The current goal is to achieve a just transition where safety and economic justice are ensured. The plant closed its doors today, but decommissioning is a long and arduous task. It will require sober, transparent, and fact-based management. We continue to call on the NYS Public Service Commission to convene a Decommissioning Oversight Board (DOB) so that decommissioning can be carried out with as much safety, austerity, and transparency as possible.

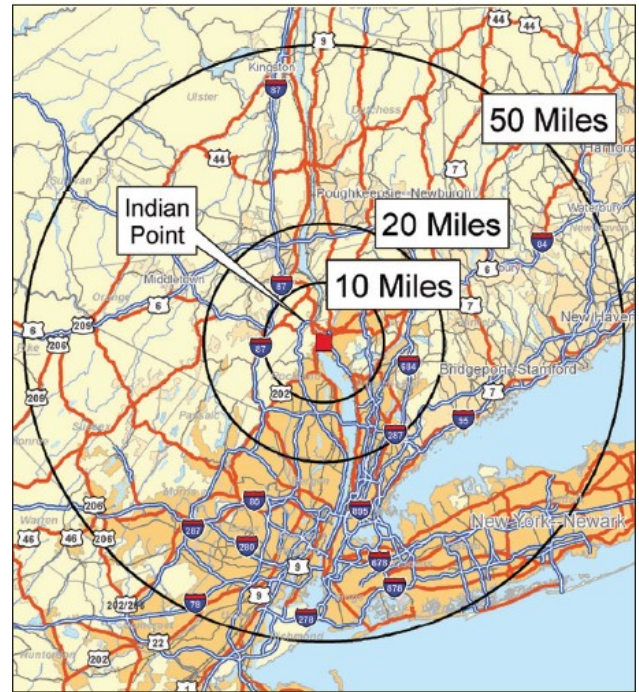


Clearwater has spent its history making the argument that Indian Point was too risky to be sited just 25 miles north of New York City. Now, we make the argument that its decommissioning and management of radioactive waste must be carried out in a responsible and consent-based manner. We are wholeheartedly against shipping the legacy nuclear waste generated by more than 40 years of operation to place the burden on those in the Southwest, as Holtec is currently proposing.

[Click here to watch a conversation from Hudson Riverkeeper about the shutdown.](#)

How has the power plant at Indian Point impacted our environment?

- Indian Point's "once-through" cooling system, along with the thermal pollution it generates, kills 300 billion Hudson River fish, eggs and larvae each year.
- The nuclear energy industry emits four to five times more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than renewables.
- Indian Point creates lethal radioactive waste, which, without a national repository for disposal, builds up on site.
- Indian Point contaminates our air, groundwater and the Hudson River with both planned and unplanned releases, as well as ongoing leaks of radioactivity. For example,



NYSDEC has repeatedly detected the deadly radioactive isotope strontium-90 in Hudson River fish.

Ensuring a Just Transition for Indian Point's Workers

Every exposure to radiation poses health risks, including programmed cell death, genetic mutations, The New York State Indian Point Closure Task Force is working with labor leaders to achieve a just transition for the workforce. According to state Labor Department Deputy Commissioner Mario Musolino: Nearly 40 percent of the workforce will be eligible for retirement in 2021, though it is unknown how many will choose that option. About 35 percent are trained utility workers whose skills are easily transferable to other plants. Some 20 percent are Teamsters who should be able to get other union assignments. Many other employees work in the trades and have transferable skills.

Riverkeeper is advocating for a prompt and safe decommissioning and dismantling of the plant, which will allow a significant portion of workers to stay on during the many years-long and labor intensive process. Also, according to E2 — a group of business leaders, investors and others who advocate for policies that benefit the economy and the environment — there are over 85,000 clean energy jobs in New York State, with a growth rate of roughly 6 percent. Energy efficiency accounts for the lion's share of the state's clean energy workers, employing roughly 80 percent of the sector. And when the state doubles the amount of clean electricity generated under the new 50 percent Clean Energy Standard, the economic benefits and jobs will grow even more rapidly. New job opportunities will come from renewable energy, like wind, solar, and fuel cells, in addition to energy efficiency.

Where will the fuel rods from Indian Point go?

According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the used fuel rods have a lethal life of 240,000 years. The prediction for the lifespan of the cask they are being put in is 300 years according to computer modeling.

While there is talk in the industry of a "hot cell" to transfer broken or aged casks there is no definite plan that has been made public. Holtec is moving the rods out of the fuel pool and into dry casks at an unprecedented speed. When all of the rods are in casks, they will set on concrete pads that will take up the same amount of space as two football fields.



After the radioactive material is dealt with, the property will be returned to the status of a green field under the supervision of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Eventually it will go back to the Village of Buchanan. All that will remain of Indian Point reactors will be the fuel rods sitting there on concrete pads.

Holtec has property in New Mexico that they want to use for what they are calling "interim storage." This would require a change of law which they are lobbying for in Congress right now. New Mexico does not want to become a radioactive dump.

The rods need to stay where they are and not be transported through neighborhoods on roads and rails. Shipping such dangerous material to another community that does not want it is undemocratic and immoral.

The community that reaped the financial benefits of the reactors must now be the de-facto guardian of the waste. Storing it above ground where it can be inspected and supervised is much safer than transporting it to a deep geological repository which is what the last Blue Ribbon Committee on high level radioactive waste recommend.

More resources can be found at www.ipsecinfo.org

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