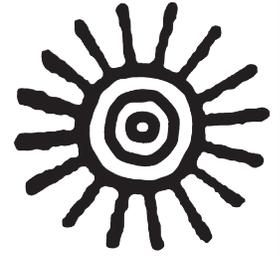


WINTER 2021

www.nukebusters.org



# The CAN-Did Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CITIZENS AWARENESS NETWORK  
ACT TODAY TO CHANGE TOMORROW...



## What Has CAN Been Up to?

In 2021 we have continued our outreach to climate change groups to have them reject nuclear power as an answer to climate change. To be successful, we needed to create allies and made “in-person” presentations. Since few major environmental groups openly oppose nuclear, we needed to focus our organizing and education work on climate activists including the Citizens Action Network, Extinction Rebellion, 350.ORG, and the PIRGS in New England. In addition, we began outreach to social justice and religious organizations. We want them to reject nuclear as a solution and oppose the targeting of working poor Hispanic communities in the Southwest for interim storage of nuclear waste, environmental racism and support a clean energy standard.

Unable to organize Tours due to Covid-19, we began work on a second and third video as well as a phone banking campaign to educate people to the evolving energy bills making their way through Congress and also ask community members to contact their legislators about their position on nuclear power, interim storage, and environmental justice. We did this in Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. Our first video “Nuclear Power to Save the Climate? You Gotta be Kidding!” continues to be watched by many ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b69v\\_hHOue8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b69v_hHOue8)). Our next video will be completed by the end of the year.

## Vermont Yankee Decommissioning

According to NorthStar, the owner of Vermont Yankee, the decommissioning of the plant is continuing on schedule and on budget. The company makes regular progress reports to the Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel. At the NDCAP meeting on September 20, 2021 it was reported that work continues on cutting up various parts of the power reactor and dismantling of the very large turbine components.

The company also reported that since the beginning of the project, three hundred twenty shipments of low-level radioactive waste have been shipped from the site. Most of the shipments end up in Andrews County, Texas, the home of Waste Control Specialists (WCS). WCS is owned by NorthStar.

In an interesting partnership, the states of Texas and Vermont have an agreement regarding the disposal of low-level waste. The Texas/Vermont Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact

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We have met in coalition with local, regional, and national groups to press for the hardening of high-level nuclear waste on-site and began a letter writing campaign in New England to federal and state legislators. We also made phone calls to engage members, update on issues, and ask them to contact legislators.

CAN also organized participation by Southwest organizers (as well as organizers across the country) in the decommissioning nuclear advisory panels in Vermont and Massachusetts to put a spotlight on environmental racism by opposing “parking lot” dumps. Due to our work, the Vermont Advisory panel withdrew its support for the proposed interim storage of nuclear waste in West Texas. We have worked with expert Marvin Resnikoff (Radioactive Waste Management Associates) on the NDCAP. Resnikoff is

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## Lessons Learned: CAN’s Zoom forum on nuclear power and climate change

### “CARBON-FREE AND NUCLEAR-FREE”

That’s what both anti-nuke and climate activists need to be saying loud and clear TOGETHER. Only a broad coalition of voices and organizations can change the course of this nation’s energy policies.

CAN organizers have found that some local climate action groups don’t mention nuclear power at all in their messaging. They are focused on the carbon-free part. While some of them may be anti-nuclear, by not talking about it, they in essence support it since nuclear power is part of the status quo energy portfolio of the U.S. Other climate activists have bought into the industry greenwashing that markets nuclear power as “clean” and carbon-free. Of course, it is neither. For our part, anti-nukers need to know and talk more about strategies for truly going carbon-free.

Wanting to build bridges locally to climate action groups, CAN approached Climate Action Now of Western Massachusetts (CANWM) to find a mutually agreeable way for CAN to make its case. They graciously agreed to have us use their Zoom platform and made their very experienced tech team available.

During August and September, CAN members worked hard on the event, and in early October, we made it happen! To draw

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# Action needed far and wide! Build Back Better

The Build Back Better Bill is good for education, families, and the climate. Particularly the Federal tax credit for solar PV systems will be enhanced by a 10-year extension, and increase to 30 percent of system costs and Refundability. Refundability means that non-profits and low-income homeowners will benefit from the Federal tax credit. Refundability will allow the US treasury to write a check based on percent of solar PV-system costs upon receipt of a tax filing.

This will impact non-profit organizations who currently (with no tax liability) are unable to utilize the tax credit and lose that benefit. Refundability will level the playing field to allow all income levels and tax status organizations to enjoy the Federal tax credit for installing 100 percent renewable energy generation.

However, currently Refundability starts in 2024. That's too late. We will lose ground. We need to start Refundability in 2022! We need to make this happen to have any chance to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Everyone—ask 10 friends who live outside of MA to ask 10 of their friends who all want solar. Call your congressional delegation and pass along to 10 more friends. Especially those in West Virginia need to call Senator Joe Manchin (304-342-5855) or DC office (202-224-3954). <https://www.manchin.senate.gov/contact-joe/email-joe>

—Claire Chang, Greenfield Solar, CAN Board Member

## **Thank You from CAN Staff & Board** **We couldn't do it without you!**

*Bob Bady • Beyond Nuclear • Boston Downwinders  
Burden Foundation • Paul Burton • C 10 Foundation  
Climate Action Now • Cape Downwinders • Connie Childs  
Dean's Beans • Lionel Delevingne • Court Dorsey  
Kristina Graham • Jerry Greenfield & Elizabeth Skarie Foundation • Guacamole Foundation • Gerry Hersh  
Dan Keller • Lintilhac Foundation • Julian Mejia  
New England Grassroots Environmental Fund  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS)  
Rothschild Foundation • Gary Sachs  
Nelia Sargent & Scott Neilsen • Michael Schreiber  
Shantigar Foundation • Amy Shollenberger  
Bob Stannard • Van Itallie Foundation  
Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance • Rae C Wright*

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# No Time to Waste

Efforts to resuscitate nuclear energy research and development rely on the myth that nuclear energy is a viable solution to the climate crisis. When it comes to climate action, nuclear cannot compete with the speed, cost, and environmental benefits of renewables. Not only does nuclear power have a larger carbon footprint than renewables like wind and solar, but deploying new nuclear power is also far too slow to meet the urgent timeline required to act on climate. Current proposals to invest federal dollars in so-called “advanced” reactors would waste time and resources on speculative technologies rather than quickly and efficiently implementing renewables to justly transition away from fossil fuels.

## ***Tell the White House and Congress: Don't Sacrifice our Economy and Environment to a Nuclear Bailout***

Proposed nuclear bailouts being pushed through Congress right now threaten our best opportunity to act on climate and revitalize the economy. Senators Cardin (D-MD), Whitehouse (D-RI), and Carper (D-DE) want Congress to include a massive subsidy for nuclear power plants in what is otherwise a good renewable energy bill. The senators' proposal would give as much as \$50-\$100 billion to dangerous, expensive nuclear power plants.

A groundbreaking new report by economist and consumer advocate Dr. Mark Cooper shows that these subsidies for nuclear energy would undermine the goals of President Biden's infrastructure and climate plans. Subsidizing aging nuclear reactors and other false solutions would obstruct the transition to a zero-emissions energy system and squander the economic and environmental benefits that such a transition would yield. Dr. Cooper's report concludes that we can create a just, equitable, thriving economy and solve the climate crisis by investing in renewable energy and modernizing our electric grid, but not if we keep bailing out nuclear energy. Nuclear power has no place in our just, prosperous, clean energy future. We can't let Congress continue to subsidize dirty and unjust energy systems while failing to enact the just transition we need and deserve.

Any resources we spend on nuclear—whether bailing out old reactors or subsidizing new ones—is time, money, and jobs wasted.

## **Take Action**



We can't let our leaders sacrifice the climate to false solutions. Tell President Biden, Vice-President Harris, and your representatives in Congress: “No Nuclear Power in the Infrastructure Plans—It's Time for a Just Transition to 100 percent Renewable Energy.”

The Future must be Carbon-Free and Nuclear-Free.

—Adapted with permission from Nuclear Information and Resource Service. (Read more: [www.NIRS.org](http://www.NIRS.org))

# Federal Nuclear Waste Policy Committee

In 2015, the then chairperson of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel (VNDCAP)—along with the Chairs of the other three Yankee Citizens Advisory Boards in Haddam (CT), Wiscasset (ME), and Rowe (MA)—signed on to a letter addressed to, among others, Senator Patrick Leahy expressing support for the implementation of “a pilot consolidated interim storage (CIS) project” for highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel in “volunteer host communities” in Texas and New Mexico. This action sent the message to the highest levels of government that the Panel approved of CIS and implied that Vermont citizens did so as well. In fact, there was no vote or even discussion by the VT Panel endorsing such a recommendation.

Concerned that the Panel might have been misrepresented by a document that has been used by the industry to demonstrate support for CIS, current NDCAP member and former Chair Lissa Weinmann challenged the Panel to review the issue, to reconsider its endorsement of the original letter, and to explore whether or not the Panel wished to take a position on federal waste policy. This it did by moving that “the Panel has no position on CIS”, and creating the VNDCAP Federal Nuclear Waste Policy Committee with Lissa as its chair.

The Committee has been meeting monthly since Jan 2021, exploring all sides of the many complex issues surrounding federal nuclear waste policy, with the intention of possibly recommending a new position for the Panel to endorse in its role as advisor to the Governor, state government, and the public. Representatives of Citizens Awareness Network have attended every meeting of the Committee and have voiced strong opposition to the proposed CIS. Rather, they say, we should take a two-pronged approach. First, “harden” the waste at reactor sites (inside reinforced buildings or bermed with earth) and ramping up security and monitoring; and second, doing the necessary work to license and build permanent repositories for the waste.

The work being done by the Committee is not an insignificant effort and deserves our attention and support. A policy statement by an arm of the Vermont state government cannot be ignored either by state or federal officials; cannot be pooh-poohed by the nuclear power industry; and promises to promote a broader, people-oriented, discussion of this critical issue on a national level. Members of the public are encouraged to review the Com-



*Skull Valley, Utah, 2002*

mittee's ongoing discussion and to attend the Committee's next meeting.

Meeting dates and times are announced on CAN's website: [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org)—or on the FNWPC website: <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vt-ndcap-federal-nuclear-waste-policy>

Please review Lissa's challenge to the VNDCAP Panel: [https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/FINAL\\_NDCAP\\_Advisory\\_Opinion\\_Memo\\_Weinmann\\_2020-12-03.pdf](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/FINAL_NDCAP_Advisory_Opinion_Memo_Weinmann_2020-12-03.pdf)

—Schuyler Gould, CAN Board Member

## VY Decommissioning

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Commission ([www.tllrwdcc.org](http://www.tllrwdcc.org)) was formed nearly thirty years ago to coordinate low-level radioactive waste disposal for Texas and Vermont. Texas holds a majority of the seats on the commission and calls most of the shots regarding Compact business. The Commission even meets in Vermont every so often.

Originally the site in West Texas was to be used exclusively for waste generated in Texas and Vermont. However, Waste Control Specialists claimed it could not survive financially only disposing of Texas and Vermont waste and got permission to open the site to customers from around the United States.

Recently, The Nuclear Regulatory Commission granted a license to Interim Storage Partners, which is a partnership between Orano USA and Waste Control Specialists, to construct a “parking lot” dump for high-level radioactive waste at the Waste Control Specialists site. The State of Texas, and Andrews County (TX), have been outspoken in their opposition to the disposal plan and the license. CAN and our allies around the country are committed to stopping the NorthStar/Waste Control Specialists plan to haul high-level waste from nuclear power plants to communities in the Southwest that do not want to become de-facto long-term dumps. We need a scientifically sound process and plan for the waste, not a dangerous and unjust stopgap scheme.

—Chris Williams, VTCAN and NIRS Board Chair



# Nukes and Climate Change

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in a wider group of activists, CANWM, the Resistance Center for Peace and Justice, the Traprock Peace Center, and local SUNRISE groups assisted with getting the word out. 49 people registered, but only 22 of those joined us for the event. We were especially pleased to have several college students in the group who were hungry for information.

Billed as a virtual Activist Community Conversation on nuclear power and climate change, the event was an hour-and-a-half of presentations, small group discussions, and report backs to the larger group. Presentations focused on the basics of nuclear power, the history and economics of nuclear power in the U.S. and its role in squeezing out renewables, and the experience of living in a reactor community and in communities targeted for mining and waste disposal. Small group conversations focused on challenges and potentials for greater collaboration between two arms of the environmental movement.

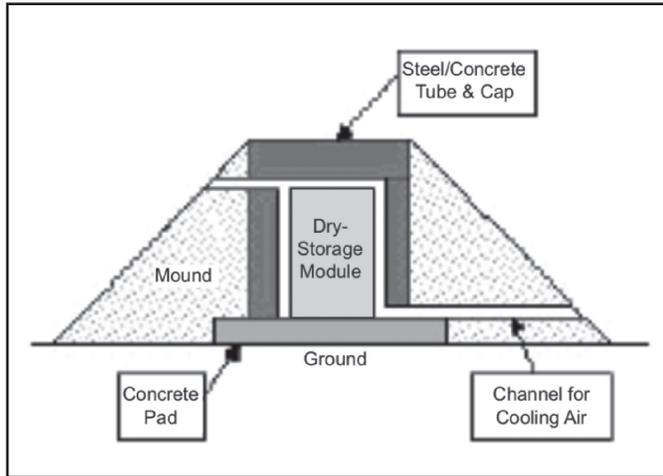
We considered this a “pilot project,” and we learned a lot. We saw that there are varying levels of knowledge about nuclear power among climate activists but in general they are terrified and overwhelmed by the work they are doing and unable to take on becoming experts in nuclear power too. We need to be the experts and build relationships with other activists so that we become known as allies and resources, and we need to turn to them in their areas of expertise. We need to be part of each other’s actions whenever we can.

We also need to directly address an area where some climate activists seem to be on the fence about keeping existing nukes in the mix to help reduce carbon emissions. We are very clear about why this is a bad idea and we need to address it up front.

In retrospect, we learned that we have a tendency to want (or need) to tell the whole complicated story of nuclear power and nuclear waste. But unloading the whole of the existential threat of nuclear power and weapons on people who are already dealing with the existential threat posed by greenhouse gasses gets in the way of our getting our message across. We need to keep it simple and spend less time imparting information and more time strategizing how to work together. Relationships is what it’s all about.

Watch the video of the October Zoom Forum here: <https://youtu.be/oVFuCB6tW7Y> or go to CAN’s website [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org).

—Ann Darling, CAN Board Member



## Can NorthStar do Better?

In a post 9/11 world the high-level nuclear waste stored at reactor sites is vulnerable to acts of malice (terrorist attack). Since there is no “permanent solution” for the safe storage of this waste, it will remain on-site for decades, if not longer. NorthStar and Holtec’s campaigns to create “parking-lot” dumps in working, poor, Hispanic communities in West Texas and New Mexico is not a done deal. Even if successful, it could take decades for any waste to be moved. CAN advocates for HOSS (hardened on-site storage) until a scientifically sound and environmentally just solution is found.

Rather than storing dozens of vulnerable dry-casks next to each other in the open air, HOSS would involve:

- Reinforcing the concrete and steel structures around each waste canister.
- Protecting these structures with mounds of concrete, steel, and gravel.
- Spreading HOSS modules across a larger land area, 60-70 feet apart. (Currently, dry casks are stored about six feet apart from each other.)
- The HOSS modules would be designed to withstand a range of weapons, explosives, and attacks—including anti-tank missiles, airliner impacts, and car bombs.
- Increased spacing between modules would mean that no more than a few casks could be damaged at once, even in the scenario of a nuclear attack.



Our vision of Vermont Yankee  
*Together we can make it happen!*

 CITIZENS AWARENESS NETWORK  
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# Inadequate Security and Vulnerability of the Pilgrim Reactor

All proposed nuclear power and dump-site safety legislation remain stalled in committee at the MA State House. Legislation to provide real-time radiation monitoring of the Holtec Hi-Storm 100 dry casks is still in the Joint Committee on Public Health.

Senator Comerford, as chair, has been asked to move it forward for a vote this legislative session. H.2227—Expanding the Emergency Planning Zone monitoring, and providing citizens with thyroid-protecting agent KI within 50 miles of the operating Seabrook reactor also need to move out of committee ASAP.

Holtec has been completing decommissioning the Pilgrim reactor at a rapid rate. In November, Holtec removed all the highly radioactive nuclear fuel from the Pilgrim spent fuel pool into cheap Hi-Storm 100 dry casks. The casks will be moved uphill to the new Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI). This area is easily visible from busy public Rocky Hill Road! Local citizens and Cape Downwinders activists have been calling attention to the inadequate security and vulnerability of this site to no avail. Recently, a supervisor at Holtec's Oyster Creek reactor in NJ was fined by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for falsifying security records. Just this past August, a whistleblower at Pilgrim also reported false records of security training. Nothing has come of these whistleblower allegations yet. Just three months ago, two individuals trespassed within the reactor property in plain sight and were able to approach the chain-link fence for 20 minutes without any security interference. We continue to call for real security around nuclear waste dumps.

An allegation was filed by Cape Downwinders with the NRC citing false and incomplete information provided by Holtec concerning worker safety issues. In response to an NRC Request for Additional Information, Holtec reported that an ambulance service

could transport contaminated and injured Individuals even though the ambulance service hadn't provided support in the area for over four years! An investigation is ongoing. However, the NRC could have conducted their own investigation by basically contacting the ambulance service to get their answer, but the NRC decided to allow Holtec to conduct their own investigation! So Holtec hired an inspector to look into the matter. The NRC gave Holtec until November 1 to respond to the July 29 allegation.

Moving radioactive fuel assemblies out of the fuel-pool, placed into dry casks and then moved up a hill to the new ISFI pad without all safety protocols in place is negligent to worker and community safety. Read the full allegation here: <https://files.constantcontact.com/4ef44f21401/0814cb65-3071-4aa4-9086-6f1d44d6ec12.pdf>

Finally, the most recent DOE plan to transport high-level nuclear waste out of Plymouth via truck and then to train rail south over the Cape Cod Canal Bridge where the waste will leave by barge is continuing the craziness and danger of radioactive waste removal.

—Diane Turco, Executive Director, Cape Downwinders

***Moving radioactive fuel assemblies out of the fuel-pool into dry casks and moved to the new ISFI pad without all safety protocols in place is negligent to worker and community safety.***



*From the CAN Archives, Brattleboro, VT*

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# What Has CAN Been Up to?

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an expert on decommissioning, nuclear waste, and nuclear waste transport. We have supported his oversight on the panel leading to a much needed alternative perspective. This has led to greater transparency and public participation.

Through our organizing work, major climate change organizations in Western Mass hosted a Zoom event on “Why nukes are not the answer” by doing presentations and breakout groups. Our goal was to develop a working relationship that supports each other’s initiatives and work for a clean energy standard. CAN is a member of Energy Independent Vermont. CAN organized letter-writing campaigns, participated in meetings and organized calls to legislators. We have an alert membership of over 1,500 people that we regularly contact providing information and actions that they can take. Watch the video of the Activist Community Conversation here: [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org).

CAN organized a National Grassroots Radioactive Waste Coalition with over 45 groups participating. CAN is the regional coordinator for New England and a member of the coalition’s steering committee. We organize participation, create strategy, and provide a toolkit for grassroots organizing. The Coalition’s focus is to create unified, strategic actions on commercial HLNW (High-level Nuclear Waste) policy including: a. Increased protections for on-site dry cask storage; b. Opposition to Interim Storage; c. Education on transportation, Yucca Mountain and Permanent alternatives that are both scientifically sound and environmentally just.

We would love to share with you, our supporters, more of



At the Gate to Vermont Yankee, 1999

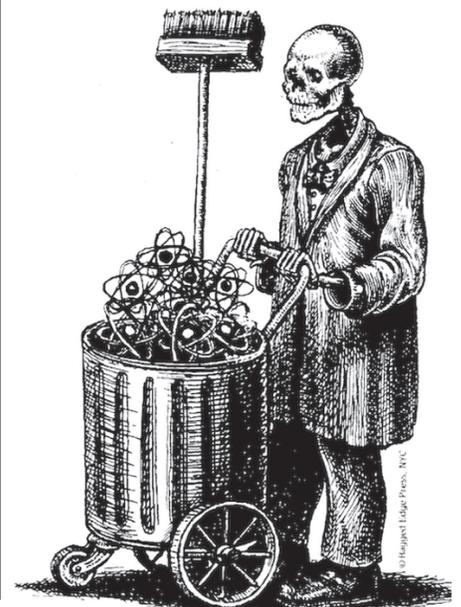
what we have been up to. Our plan is to organize a gathering in Brattleboro, VT or Greenfield, MA in the beginning of 2022, Covid permitting, with food and updates about what’s been going on with nukes and what we are planning to do in the new year. We’ll keep you posted.

In the meantime, we invite you to attend one or more of our weekly organizing meetings online. Since the beginning of the pandemic, CAN’s Organizing Committee has been meeting via Zoom every Monday evening at 6:00 PM for an hour. Please email [can@nukebusters.org](mailto:can@nukebusters.org) if you are interested and we will send you the Zoom link the morning of the meeting.

—Deb Katz, Executive Director CAN



CAN on the road, 1998



The Dustbin of History