



NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE: STILL WRONG FOR WYOMING

We need your help to oppose nuclear waste storage in Wyoming. The risks to our state are high and the reasons are conclusive: storing high-level radioactive waste threatens our public safety, our national image, our economic health, our resources, and our long-term prosperity.

WHY SHOULD WE TRUST A FAILED NATIONAL POLICY FOR A DANGEROUS WASTE?

WHAT IS NUCLEAR SPENT FUEL?

- This waste is extremely dangerous. Unshielded, it can give off a lethal dose of radiation in seconds.
- Federal law requires that spent fuel be isolated from the environment for 10,000 years.
- The time scale needed for the radiotoxicity of the spent fuel to drop to the level of natural uranium is very long, approximately 200,000–300,000 years.

OUR NATION'S FAILED NUCLEAR WASTE LEGACY

- For more than 50 years, our nation has struggled to address disposal of nuclear waste. Currently there are approximately 80,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste stored at reactors with over 80 percent of this waste generated in the eastern half of the United States.
- The Nuclear Waste Policy Act establishes Yucca Mountain in Nevada as the only site for a permanent repository. It also provides for optional “interim” storage, but only with restrictions tying temporary storage to the development of a permanent facility.
- Tennessee, New Mexico, Washington, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Utah, Georgia, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin have ferociously opposed storage of these wastes in their states. Yucca Mountain was halted in 2010 due to opposition from Nevada.
- A bipartisan Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future was convened by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2010. Their recommendations on how to move a national policy forward have not been implemented.

WYOMING HAS REPEATEDLY SAID “NO” TO NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

- In 1991 the Department of Energy proposed a “Monitored Retrievable Storage” nuclear waste facility in Wyoming. Gov. Sullivan ended the project a year later, citing numerous concerns.
- A 1994 University of Wyoming poll showed that 80.4 percent of residents opposed nuclear waste storage in Wyoming.
- In 1998 a private company proposed a facility to store nuclear waste, and Gov. Geringer refused to grant permission for a preliminary feasibility study, as outlined under Wyoming’s law, which ended the proposal.

CORE REASONS TO REJECT STORAGE OF NUCLEAR WASTE

THIS DUMP IS FOREVER ONCE IT'S HERE

- Once a “temporary” facility is constructed, it will become a *de facto* permanent repository. There are no legal, political, or financial mechanisms to ensure waste would ever be removed. This is because there is no permanent disposal solution, despite decades of efforts by the federal government.
- There is no need for temporary nuclear waste storage. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has determined that spent nuclear fuels can be safely stored at the reactor sites for 100+ years.

TRANSPORTATION = HIGH RISK WITH INADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS

- The frequency and distance of high-level radioactive waste shipments will be far greater than any our country has ever experienced. The result would be an unprecedented public safety experiment on our rails and roads, and through our neighborhoods.
- The federal government has failed to adopt a variety of safety recommendations for transport:
 - Full-scale testing of actual types of casks to be used for transportation. (Videos of crash tests promoted by proponents are scale models of outdated casks filmed in the 1980s.)
 - Updated safety standards for long-duration fire scenarios and how to prevent those.
 - Comprehensive transportation plans, criteria for route selection, and detailed surveys of routes to identify potential long-duration hazards, plus risks of sabotage terrorism & safeguards.
 - Technical assistance and funding to states for a tracking system, emergency response, shipment escorts, and inspections.
- A recent congressional report notes several other problems with transportation, including the safety of transporting high burn-up spent nuclear fuel, “hot” waste that does not meet the safety criteria for transportation, and inadequate transportation infrastructure for heavy rail car casks.

NUCLEAR WASTE IS BAD FOR BUSINESS AND DIVERSIFICATION

- The history of nuclear facilities creates many negative public perceptions about radioactivity, public health and safety, and vulnerability to accidents and terrorism that can harm our state’s image for tourism, agriculture, our pristine outdoor environment and diversifying our economy.
- Studies in Tennessee, New Mexico, Texas, Nevada confirm this negative impact to tourism, ability to attract new residents, agricultural products, diversification of businesses, and property values.

THIS IS NOT A QUICK FIX FOR OUR STATE’S FINANCIAL NEEDS

- Currently a federal “temporary” storage facility for spent nuclear fuel is not legal under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. Interim storage is only authorized when tied to milestones in the development of a permanent repository at Yucca Mountain.
- Legally questionable private-sector storage will lack federal funding for transportation and storage.
- Promises of financial payments to the state are unreliable given legal restrictions and congressional inaction on the use of the Nuclear Waste Fund — which is largely targeted for a *permanent* repository.
- There is no quick siting and transportation process, as licensing can take 5–10 years, new rail casks are not tested or ready, and transportation routes and infrastructure will need to be studied and upgraded.

THIS IS THE WRONG DIRECTION FOR WYOMING

The history of nuclear waste storage in our country is fraught with broken promises by our federal government, including missed timelines, changing scientific guidelines, shifting strategies, political interference, and disregard of state input. Wyoming does not need to study this historically failed proposal any further. The regulatory, political, safety, and economic risks far outweigh any short-term benefits. We urge the Legislature to reject spending any more of the public’s time or resources in such a wrong direction.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The legislature's Joint Minerals Committee will meet in Casper on Nov. 4-5 to vote on this proposal. **Please contact these members and urge them to reject nuclear waste storage in Wyoming:**

Sen. Jim Anderson (Jim.Anderson@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Tom Crank (Thomas.Crank@wyoleg.gov)
Sen. Bo Biteman (Bo.Biteman@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Shelly Duncan (Shelly.Duncan@wyoleg.gov)
Sen. Hank Coe (Hank.Coe@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Danny Eyre (Danny.Eyre@wyoleg.gov)
Sen. Chris Rothfuss (Chris.Rothfuss@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Bill Henderson (Bill.Henderson@wyoleg.gov)
Rep. Joe MacGuire (Joe.MacGuire@wyoleg.gov) Sen. Jeff Wasserburger
(Jeff.Wasserburger@wyoleg.gov)
Rep. Mike Greear (Mike.Greear@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Donald Burkhart (Donald.Burkhart@wyoleg.gov)
Rep. Dan Furphy (Dan.Furphy@wyoleg.gov) Rep. Bunky Loucks (Bunky.Loucks@wyoleg.gov)

Please be respectful and concise, and speak from your experience and values.

WATCH FOR EMAIL UPDATES OR VISIT OUR WEB PAGE AT
wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org/about/public-lands-in-wyoming
FOR HOW TO GET INVOLVED.