

Council to appeal Trojan waste expansion

By CATHERINE SEIGNER
Of the Emerald

The state Energy Facility Sitting Council decided by unanimous vote Monday to appeal a recent federal order allowing Portland General Electric Co. to expand waste storage facilities at the Trojan nuclear power plant.

Don Godard, EFSC staff director, recommended the agency exercise its authority to appeal because the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) order issued Oct. 5 included only one of the six technical safety specifications EFSC had requested.

Godard emphasized that EFSC is not arguing with the federal decision allowing additional spent fuel storage racks at the plant, but that the agency is concerned about the safety questions.

"Council is not opposing installation of racks," Godard said. "We would just like to impose restrictions on their use."

The additional technical specifications include water chemistry controls within the spent fuel pool, alternative storage cavities, water temperature controls — used to standardize bron content — and installation of facilities allowing the movement of a full reactor core reserve to the pool at one time.

Godard said the appeal, if successful, would establish additional requirements that might help avert accidents.

"We don't feel you can operate a nuclear plant on a gentleman's agreement," he told several PGE officials at Monday's meeting. "PGE has argued in the past that it doesn't have to comply with state regulations."

PGE Vice President John Frewing told EFSC it should not appeal the federal decision.

"There is no safety issue outstanding after the NRC order. The appeal process is 'open-ended' with regard to time and cost and

would be counter-productive both to our customers and to the people of Oregon."

Frewing cited a previous case in Minnesota where Northern States Power Co. ran into similar problems at the Prairie Island nuclear plant.

"The appeal was instituted in June 1977 and is still pending," Frewing said. "There has been no action in 18 months."

Godard asked PGE officials if the appeal would prohibit in any way the company's plans to install additional racks. Frewing said it would not.

"We can still operate the plant, but the appeal would increase the technical specifications even more."

Godard said he could see additional specifications would be "burdensome" but that additional requirements are needed.

"That's the difference between PGE and the EFSC staff," Godard said. "A thorough training program will identify to plant operators the basis for all requirements."

"We have had instances in the past when PGE was doing something different than what the state would interpret," Godard went on. "The type of problems that come up are caused by lack of attention to detail."

EFSC member Bill Luch moved to adopt the staff recommendation to appeal the NRC order.

"This is a viable and sensible way to bring NRC attention to state concerns over the 'bad odor' surrounding the back end of the fuel cycle (nuclear waste)," Luch said.

"If we do nothing, we will allow ourselves to slide into a de facto storage situation like that happening in 29 other sites right now. Sooner or later we're going to end up in court on this issue."

Marian Frank, EFSC member and Eugene resident, agreed with Luch. "I'm committed to going ahead with an appeal."

Prior to the unanimous vote, EFSC member John Thorpe said adherence to technical specifications is mandatory.

"You can't put a price tag on safety."

Hearing fails to attract input

Criminal justice planning was not the most prevalent issue among Lane County citizens Monday night, as was apparent when a lone citizen turned out for a public hearing on the subject.

The hearing was the first attempt by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for Criminal Justice Planning to solicit citizen input to aid the committee in developing problem statements for a Criminal Justice Plan for the 1980 fiscal year.

Problem statements for the plan will be developed by CAC, comprised of citizens-at-large and the Technical Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Planning, made up of administrators for Oregon criminal justice systems and submitted to Lane Council of Governments by Dec. 1 for review.

The Criminal Justice Plan for the 1979 fiscal year was the first of its kind for Lane County. The plan was put together to organize and identify legitimate criminal justice problems and to deal with the problem of funding.

Lane County received \$227,000 in federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration money for the 1979 fiscal year and the figure will be near the same for 1980. The money will be administered through the Criminal Justice Plan in the form of grants to public and private non-profit agencies.

LEAA funds are split among five categories, and the problem statements are to address those


areas: 5 percent to prosecution, 5 percent to defense, 20 percent to juveniles, 10 percent to courts and 20 percent to corrections. The remaining 40 percent of the funds will go to enforcement.

Additional funds, supplied through the Juvenile Justice Act, are also to be administered by the Criminal Justice Plan. The funds will amount to about \$50,000 for the 1980 fiscal year.

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