

January 27, 2022

Information on Pilgrim Station Decommissioning

Dear Stakeholders, Elected Officials, Advocacy Groups and Community Members:

At the November Pilgrim Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Meeting (NDCAP) a discussion was held regarding the discharge of processed and filtered water from the Pilgrim station as part of the ongoing decommissioning. As you may be aware, it is well known that these discharges are normal for nuclear plants and are very well regulated by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). These discharges are also allowed by the EPA and the 2019 agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which set forth strict clean-up standards.

In fact, the Pilgrim plant has discharged water for its entire 50-year lifespan. In addition to liquid releases, the Pilgrim plant has also evaporated water, using residual heat, which is also regulated and discharged through the air handling systems.

Both methods of discharge are well documented, regulated, and the federal limits that have been set are established based on scientific expert evaluation, public input, and are considered safe for humans and the environment.

However, with the recent media coverage I believe many people have forgotten about these discharges or may have been unaware. People may also not be aware of the facts associated with the discharges, how closely regulated they are, and may not be fully aware that they are safe.

In this paper ([click here](#)) we summarize some of the pertinent facts and questions associated with water disposition.

As we progress through decommissioning, Pilgrim station has three available options, all of which will most likely be necessary.

1. ***Continue to process, filter, monitor, and discharge the water*** at the cleanest levels we can meet. When this method is used the Pilgrim plant can often cleanup the water to levels well below the NRC limit (**100 millirem to the public annually from Nuclear Power**) and the EPA limit (**25 millirem**). This activity is performed in small batches and has very little or no impact to the environment. This technique can also be timed to address concerns by local stakeholders, if desired.
  - In more recent times, the water discharged from Pilgrim had an average total dose of **0.12 millirem** annually. This is approximately **833 times lower** than the NRC limit of 100 millirem referenced above. It is also **5,500 times less** than what the average American receives from manmade and natural environmental sources, which is **620 millirem**. As an example of dose in our everyday lives, a transcontinental flight in the summer would provide an individual with **4 millirem** of dose and the typical single dental x-ray is **0.5 millirem**.
  - The last calendar year with both multiple releases and a significant volume with over 300,000 gallons being processed and released provided a maximum annual exposure to an individual in the environment of **0.03 millirem**, or **3,333 times lower** than the NRC limit.

2. ***Continue to evaporate the water***, this technique has been used for several years using residual heat and the discharge is filtered and released through building air handling systems. In the last few years approximately 680,000 gallons of water have been evaporated. At this stage of decommissioning the plant would need to use electricity in great quantities to generate such heat and might also need to use the diesel fuel/diesel generator to help create the power.
3. ***Transport the water to another facility for processing and discharge***. This technique involves extensive trucking, risk of vehicle incident and the water is still processed and discharged in a permitted and safe fashion.

We will continue to perform a safe decommissioning that will allow for eventual reuse of the property in a way that will benefit the community at-large. We will accomplish that by adhering to the state and federal regulations we operate under, including for any safe radiological or non-radiological discharges of treated water.

We appreciate the support of the community during decommissioning, and we look forward to continuing open and transparent communication on the safe decommissioning of Pilgrim Station and providing our path forward on this issue later in 2022.

Kelly Trice



President, Holtec Decommissioning International