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Fermi Scrams During Shutdown

While we were tabling at the Ann Arbor powwow providing people with information about the Fermi 2 nuclear reactor on March 23rd, Fermi scrambled (shut itself down).

The License Event report filed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stated, “due to high reactor pressure vessel pressure when the turbine bypass valves unexpectedly closed while attempting to lower generator MW to Mwe to support shutdown for a refueling outage.”

The report states that all systems responded normally to the scram “with the exception of the pressure control system. The transient occurred while lowering on turbine speed/load demand which caused a rise in pressure and power until the reactor protection system setpoint for reactor pressure high was exceeded and resulted in an automatic reactor scram.”

Fermi 2 was being shut down for a refueling outage when the scram happened. The article in the Monroe News did not mention the scram, it just said that very many repairs DTE would make during the outage.

The article also said refueling outages were done every 24 months, which means Fermi has been fully loaded with high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) fuel. Each refueling replaced one third of the fuel rods, and before loading the high heat rods, refueling happened every 18 months. A refueling outage usually takes a month or two, and we will keep you posted.

On the other side of the state, Donald Cook Unit 2, Michigan’s only other operating nuclear reactor, also had a scram that weekend. Here are the reports for both scrams. <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/event-status/event/en.html#en57045>

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Wild Rice Cook-Off Rocked!



The Wild Rice cook-off winners were: First place, Kaela Wabanimkee Harris, Odawa/Ojibwe (who also won first place last year); Second place was Andrea Pierce, Little Travis Bay Odawa; and third place was Alex Annette (Burgess), Sault Saint Marie Chippewa. (photo by Gabriela Alacazar)

Over 200 people turned out to our second annual Community Appreciation Wild Rice Cook-off. Manoomin is also known as “Food that grows on water” and recently became Michigan’s State Grain. It is a central part of the diet of the Indigenous people of the Great Lakes and is in their Migration story.

The event was held at North American Indian Association of Detroit (NAIA) and the director, Brian Moore, gave a welcoming speech. Our Community Organizer, Jesse DeerInWater, explained who CRAFT is and what we are about.

Dynamite Hill Farms provided the rice for the event and the owner, Jerry Jondreau, gave a talk to explain the history and his family's work to reestablish rice patches and gathering.

Local Indigenous catering, Rosebud Bear Schneider of MapleBuds Kitchen, provided a feast of native food for the attendees. Antonio Rafael gave out bottles of locally produced maple syrup. The group True Earth provided White Pine Tea and gave packages for people to take home. And SO many people to thank for their attendance and help! And a good time was had by all.



Follow-up Inspection Report

In our January issue, we covered the original Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) report in “Fermi Workers Won’t Squeal.” This current NRC inspection was to figure out why employees would not speak up “for fear of retaliation, embarrassment, and/or it would be closed out to the initiator just having a ‘beef’ with management.”

And the results were pretty much as we predicted, fear of losing their jobs. This report listed the Corrective Action Documents (CAD) that the NRC reviewed which included “Prioritization of Refuel Floor Work Activities Increased Both Industrial Safety and Radiological Risk” and “Unnecessary Dose Received when Two Techs Were Directed to Enter the Drywell Basement to take Pictures of a Condition Already Reported.”

Unfortunately, the public cannot see the details in CAD filings – without a Freedom of Information Act filing, which is usually more trouble than it is worth. See the whole report here.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML24067A189>

100-year-old Trenton Goes Down

DTE’s Trenton Channel Power Plant began operating in 1924, and 100 years later, 1,000 pounds of dynamite brought down the two 600 foot “candy cane” towers visible from Metro airport.

The same day the towers came down, the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) gave DTE approval to construct a 220 megawatt/800-megawatt hour lithium iron-phosphate battery energy storage system at a cost of \$460 million.

Study on New Nukes in Michigan

Enercon has released the report sanctioned by Public Acts 166 and 218 to study building new reactors in Michigan. The report is over 200 pages, but the summary states the negative issues are what to do with the waste and the possibility of a Chernobyl on Lake Erie, while the positive highlights the number of jobs created.

Monroe resident Hedi Kaufman is reading the whole report. “From the little bit I read, the report appears not to take sides; it’s just that when comparing the pros and cons, a person’s values come into play,” stated Kaufman. “Are higher costs of nuclear and being able to meet Michigan’s goal of 100% carbon free really worth having nuclear wastes lying around for millennia comparable?”

Here is the full report:

[Nuclear Feasibility Study Final Report](#)

Further information regarding the study can be found on the [Nuclear Feasibility Study Workgroup webpage](#).

New Bills for More Nukes

“Bipartisan” state legislators introduced bills to aid the nuclear industry in Michigan on March 19. The legislators are Reps. Joey Andrews, D-St. Joseph; Graham Filler, R-Clinton County; Mike McFall, D-Hazel Park; Samantha Steckloff, D-Farmington Hills; and Pauline Wendzel, R-Bainbridge Township.

Nuclear energy has been labeled “clean” but not renewable and Andrews is pushing on behalf of

Holtec's plan to build two Small Modular Reactors (SMR) at the closed Palisades reactor site in his district.

While downplaying the nuclear waste that will be lethal forever, and the threat of a nuclear disaster, the politicians promote the new jobs the reactors could bring. DTE's license to build a Fermi 3 is also being mentioned.

The legislative package also includes money for colleges to train people to work in the nuclear industry. House Bill 4753 would give tax credits to manufacturing in the nuclear industry.

The other House bills are #5606, which among other things would abolish the Public Service Commission and start a new one. Grants to students who trained as nuclear workers, that would be #5607. Money to colleges to give degrees in nuclear technology is #5608 and money to schools to train nuclear workers, #5609 is similar to #5608 except #5609 sets out some duties of state officers.



FYI – Climate Crisis News

= Michigan regulators approve a \$92 million rate increase for Consumers Energy, less than half of what the utility requested, to pay for grid investments as reliability criticism continues. (*Detroit News, Planet Detroit*)

= DTE Energy is among U.S. gas utilities passing on the costs of purchasing "responsible gas" to customers, a process that critics say has questionable climate benefits. (*DeSmog*)

= Federal nuclear regulators release a long-awaited proposal aimed at speeding up the licensing process for small, advanced reactors. (*E&E News*)

= Michigan recently joined roughly a dozen states where proposed legislation seeks to rein in utilities'

use of ratepayer money for lobbying, charitable giving, trade group memberships and other political spending. (*States Newsroom*)

= A vacant house in a Detroit neighborhood is being converted into a solar workforce training site that hosts various community events and services. (*Model D*)

= A conservative lawmaker from Michigan's Upper Peninsula joins an Ann Arbor Democrat to sponsor community solar legislation they say would ultimately benefit ratepayers. (*WMUK*)

= Michigan regulators approve DTE Energy's plan for a \$460 million, 220 MW battery storage project at the site of a former coal plant that was just demolished. (*Detroit News*)

= A Michigan tribal member and activist criticizes President Biden's silence on whether to shut down the Line 5 pipeline in the Straits of Mackinac. (*Planet Detroit*)

= Michigan lawmakers introduce bipartisan legislation to jumpstart advanced nuclear reactor development through manufacturing incentives and credits for universities that train workers in the nuclear sector. (*MLive*)

= Four Midwest states receive a share of \$22 million in federal funding aimed at providing local resources for renewable energy planning and siting. (*Solar Power World*)

= Momentum is building behind nuclear energy in Michigan as lawmakers seek to support the industry, regulators study the benefits and risks, and top state and federal officials plan to reopen a shuttered plant. (*Michigan Advance*)

= Detroit-based utility DTE Energy files a \$456 million rate increase request with state regulators that executives say would improve grid reliability. (*Detroit Free Press*)

= The Biden administration is providing \$1.5 billion to help restart the shuttered Palisades nuclear power plant in Covert, U.S. Energy Secretary and former Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm announced Wednesday.

US Has Plenty of Money for Nukes

In addition to the \$1.5 billion the Biden Administration is providing to restart the Palisades reactor (see story above), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) released its Fiscal Year 2025 budget

request which includes \$1.6 billion for the Office of Nuclear Energy (NE).

The money includes these five areas: 1) \$188 Million (M) for HALEU for DOE projects. 2) \$142.5M to develop new technologies (Small Modular Reactors (SMR) that are being planned all over but haven't been developed yet.) 3) Boosting nukes at universities, \$143M. 4) Money to advance the use of digital tools and AI is \$3M. 5) \$8M to support U.S. reactors internationally.

Additionally, the DOE announced they would provide up to \$22M for large scale renewable facilities and that six state-based projects will receive \$10 million.

Michigan is one of the six states and was awarded \$2M of the \$10M. here is what the DOE said about it.

“Led by Michigan Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, the collaborative will establish a one-stop-shop for resources and experts in the field of renewable energy siting and provide no-cost technical assistance to Michigan Communities.”

Could EGLE siphon off more money for nuclear, i.e., to train workers for the nuclear industry?

Ann Arbor Powwow Quilt Winner

Congratulations to Margaret “Peggy” Stephenson for winning the CRAFT quilt at the 50th anniversary of the Ann Arbor powwow.



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Thanks for the Contributions to CRAFT! Quintin Reed, Ed Steinman, Sally Fink, Mary M. Stephenson, Eliza Webb, Keith Gunter. I apologize for not thanking people previously – but I just found out how to see who donated. Well, now I know. Many thanks!

March Fermi Documents Received

= **ML24067A189**. Follow up Inspection Report. See article, page 2.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML24067A189>

= **ML24002B181**. Issuance of Amendment 228 which changes Fermi's Technical Specification to read all valves not just check valves.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML24002B181>