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DTE Loads Six More Casks

DTE loaded six more cement casks with spent fuel rods pulled from Fermi 2's Spent Fuel Pool (SFP) in July and August of this year. The casks are HI_STORM 100s manufactured by Holtec.

Each cask holds 68 bundles of spent fuel rods that have been in the SFP for at least five years for them to cool down enough to move. Since there are no waste disposal plans, the casks may be sitting on Lake Erie's shore for eternity.

The casks were loaded on July 11, 14, 20, 27, August 3, and 10. And those six make a total of 34 filled casks of deadly forever radioactive waste sitting on a concrete slab named Independent Spent Fuel Storage (ISPS).

NRC Slaps Fermi with Violations

[The Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave Fermi 2 two violations after their Integrated Inspection which ended June 30, 2023.](#)

One violation was for "Inoperable Diesel Fire Pump due to Clogged Cooling Water Strainers." Apparently, workers changed from cleaning the strainers twice per year, to once per year. "Lake debris was found near the pump suction to a depth of 12-16 inches."

The second was "Failure to Implement Fire Barrier Inspections." The tests had begun but were never finished.

The report also reviews unresolved items such as "Increasing Differential Pressures on the Emergency Cooling Water Heat Exchangers." This stems from finding "the pressure across the emergency equipment cooling water was higher than both the maintenance limit and the established operability limit."

Citizens' Resistance at Fermi Two

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EGLE Issues DRAFT NPDES

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) issued a draft permit for the Fermi 2 reactor to use and abuse Lake Erie water. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit reads like a present to DTE.

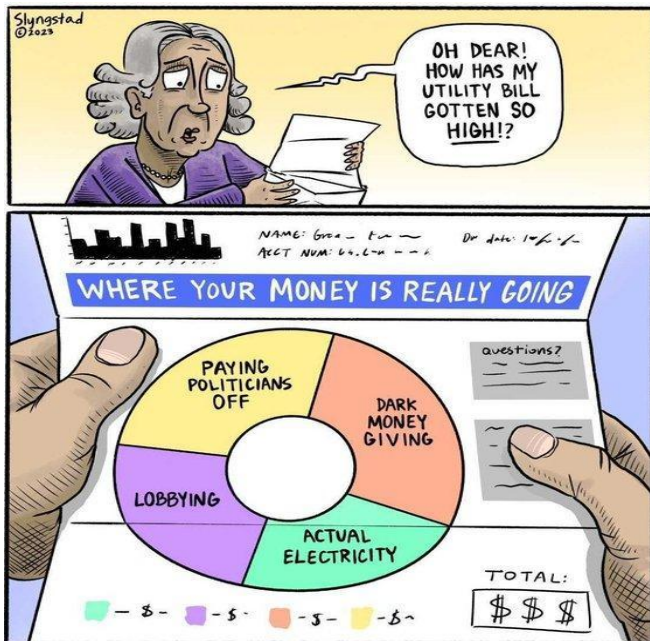
Fermi has eight points of discharge of their waste, 001B, 001D, 001E, 009A, 011A, 011C, and 013A. There are two pages of chemicals listed, including seven types of PCBs, although the permit reads, "The permittee shall not discharge any polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to surface waters of the state as a result of plant operations."

Then EGLE gives DTE until April 4, **2028**, to declare no PCBs have been discharged. Here is the Draft permit should you want to read the whole thing. CRAFT will ask for a public hearing. There are no thermal limits on the cooling water that Fermi returns to Lake Erie. **You can read the permit on our website under Resources.**

Fermi's Fish Kills

This is a quote from DTE's application for renewal of Fermi's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

"The withdrawal of cooling water removes and kills hundreds of billions of aquatic organisms from waters of the United States each year, including fish, shellfish, fish eggs, and larvae. Aquatic organisms drawn through cooling water intake structures (CWIS) are either impinged (I) against components of the intake structure or get drawn into or entrained (E) in the cooling water system itself. Most impacts are to the early life stages of aquatic organisms. Due to the adverse environmental impact of I and E on aquatic organisms, USEPA has promulgated rules under section 316(b) of the Clean Water Act to set national performance standards to minimize the mortality of aquatic organisms from I and E for new and existing industrial facilities." Page 31



Problem Identification Inspection

The NRC has scheduled a Problem Identification and Resolution Inspection at Fermi beginning September 18th. They requested massive amounts of documents dated back to November 2021.

The most requested documents dealt with Fermi's Corrective Action Documents. And will your jaded editor feel better if they issue DTE another violation or two?

Seismic System Inoperable

On August 1st, the Fermi active seismic monitoring system showed earthquake activity in the area. DTE filed an Event report to say that neither the United States Geological Survey nor the next closest reactor could confirm the results, so the system was declared inoperable.

Fermi had been at 72% power at the end of the month but went to 58% that day. Gray smoke was seen to be coming out of the cooling towers instead of white steam.

Fermi was restored to 100% by August 4th and then went to 0% power on the 20th to fix a leak of two gallons per minute in the coolant system. Fermi was still at 0% power as we go to press.

DTE's Call-In Number

Here is DTE's call-in number: 313-235-5555. If one wants info about Fermi 2, there is a general call-in number that one can call and possibly get information after giving your life history to an operator. (I exaggerated for emphasis, she only wanted my name, my category, my call-back number, my email, and the name of the paper I am with, and the organization.) I called on August 8th and never received a call back. So much for DTE's public information sharing. lol

FYI – Climate Crisis News

= Ann Arbor, Michigan, residents [renew calls for a municipal utility](#) to replace DTE Energy following another recent round of storm-induced power outages. (*CBS Detroit*)

= Frequent and long power outages have led more southeastern Michigan residents to [buy backup generators](#), potentially worsening local air pollution during summer months. (*Planet Detroit*)

= Deferred maintenance costs of [reopening a shuttered Michigan nuclear plant](#) are a major unknown as state lawmakers commit \$150 million to the effort. (*Crain's Detroit Business*)

= Some public health and environmental experts are [hesitant to label Michigan a "climate](#)

haven” based on persistent air quality concerns and other factors that particularly harm low-income residents. (*Michigan Advance*)

= A Michigan environmental justice advocate says state lawmakers should pass legislation barring investor-owned utilities from using ratepayer funding on political campaigns. (*Bridge*)

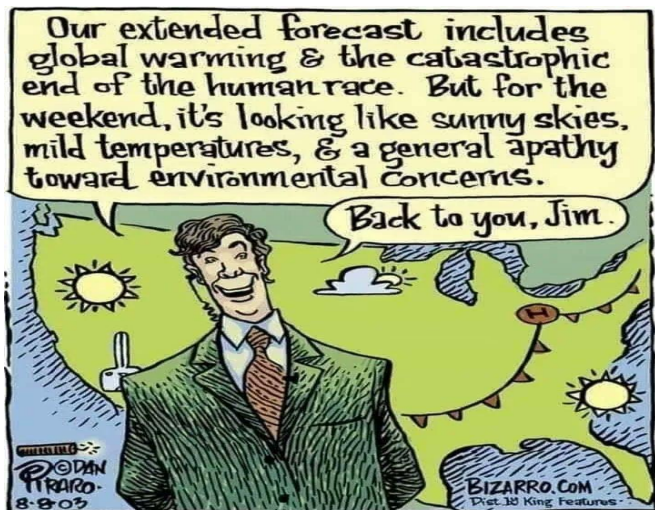
= Michigan utility officials say a pumped hydroelectric storage facility along Lake Michigan will act as “one huge storage solution” to manage peak production as more renewables come online. (*MLive*)

= Michigan’s attorney general says DTE Energy’s \$622 million rate increase request for pilot programs and higher profit margins is nearly twice as much as the utility actually needs. (*MLive*)

= A Michigan city joins a DTE Energy program that allows customers to purchase a larger share of renewable energy. (*Southfield Sun*)

= A local economic development agency plans to present findings today on the potential economic losses of permanently closing a Michigan nuclear plant that’s being considered for reopening. (*Herald-Palladium*)

= Michigan Democrats call for the swift passage of a bill package that aims to improve residents’ access to solar, including through community solar projects and lifting caps on utility distributed generation programs. (*Michigan Advance*)



Promises, Promises, Commitments

The Fermi 2 nuclear reactor was designed and built to operate for forty years before it ceased

operations. That was to be in 2025, but DTE obtained (and CRAFT tried to stop it legally) a license extension to run the reactor until 2045.

But to get an old reactor safe enough to run another twenty years, DTE made some serious commitments – 37 total. Number 4 deals with bolting and DTE has requested a Relief Request, so they do not have to honor this commitment.

All these commitments are supposed to be completed before the period of license extension starts, in 2026. We hope they don’t request relief from all 37.

Fermi 2’s License Amendment 224

The NRC issued Fermi an emergency license amendment to deal with the coolant leak which caused a shutdown at two gallons per minute and was projected to go to five gallons within two weeks. This amendment gives them time to fix the leak, but also changes a couple of technical specifications.

One change involves the “Primary Containment Oxygen Concentration” which is confusing, such as the statement, “The proposed changes would also remove the undefined term “Reactor shutdown” and provide adequate terminal actions.”

August Fermi Documents Received

= **ML23205A139**. Request for Enforcement Discretion. See article, page 3, Promises....

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23205A139>

= **Event Number 56650**. Active Seismic Monitoring System Inoperable. See page 4.

= **ML23215A152**. Fermi loads three more casks. <https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23215A152>

= **ML23215A194**. Integrated Inspection Report. See article, page 1.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23215A194>

= **ML23219A179**. NRC requests tons of information from DTE regarding upcoming problem ID inspection.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23215A194>

= **ML23216A187**. Relief Request for Extended License Period.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23216A187>

= **ML23222A037**. LAR for Tech Specs. EESW & EECW & UHS. Permission to repair MDCT fans A and C pedestals, gives DTE an extra 7 days for each fan's pedestal. Request granted.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23222A037>

= **ML23220A023**. Fermi Relief Request Email and DTE wants it before Fermi's extended operations.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23220A023>

= **ML23227A133**. NRC license Examination info.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23227A133>

= **ML23227A221**. Emergency Application to Revise Tech Specs to fix coolant leakage.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23227A221>

= **ML23229A012**. Fermi gets License Amendment 224 to Revise Tech Specs for emergency leaks.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23229A012>

= **ML23235A306**. Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation Cask Registration. Fermi loaded three more casks, making a total of 34 casks

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23235A306>

= **ML23235A224**. Fermi's Inspection Plan.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23235A224>

= **ML23191A898**. Final Environmental Assessment for Fermi's ISFSI Decommissioning.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23191A898>

= **ML23191A897**. NRC approves above.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML23191A897>



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Fermi Shuts Down for Repairs

On August 20th, an increasing leakage rate, approximately 2 gallons per minute, was identified on the reactor recirculation line between the inboard isolation valve and the jet pump riser. On the 21st, Fermi shut down to investigate and repair.

Fermi was still shut down on the 25th when a tornado hit within a mile of it – the third tornado to hit Monroe County this year.