

Sept. 2018, p. 41). In November 2018, the companies submitted an application to the NRC for the transfer of the plant's operating license, along with Pilgrim's decommissioning trust fund and the general license for the plant's independent spent fuel storage installation, from Entergy to Holtec. The NRC published notice of the application and the opportunity to request a hearing and petition for leave to intervene in the January 31 *Federal Register* (NN, Mar. 2019, p. 79).

In its petition, filed on February 20 by Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healy, the state presents two contentions to the license transfer. First, the state contends that the companies have not demonstrated that Pilgrim's decommissioning trust fund will provide adequate financial assurance that Holtec will be able to fully decommission and restore the site, as well as manage the anticipated 61 dry casks of spent nuclear fuel until they are moved to a permanent repository. Second, the state is arguing that the license transfer, along with an associated exemption request and Holtec's revised post-shutdown decommissioning activities report (PSDAR), constitutes a major federal action requiring an environmental review by the NRC. The license exemption would allow Holtec to use a portion of the trust fund for spent fuel management and site restoration costs. The revised PSDAR, which contains Holtec's accelerated decommissioning schedule, was submitted to the NRC in November 2018.

"While the Commonwealth welcomes the possibility of a properly conducted and expedited cleanup and restoration of Pilgrim, the risk of a funding shortfall and the attendant significant health, safety, environmental, financial, and economic risks to the Commonwealth and its citizens raise serious questions about the realization of that benefit," the petition states.

The activist group Pilgrim Watch also filed a petition with the NRC on February 20 seeking to intervene in the license transfer proceeding. Similar to Massachusetts, the group is questioning the companies' financial assurance and calling for an environmental review.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

New technologies needed to accelerate cleanup

New breakthrough solutions and technologies are needed to speed the cleanup of Department of Energy sites, according to a report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) released on March 4. The report, *Independent Assessment of Science and Technology for the Department of*

Energy's Defense Environmental Cleanup Program, recommends changes in the way that the DOE manages science and technology development in order to accelerate the cleanup of radioactive waste and contaminated soil, groundwater, and facilities at U.S. nuclear weapons sites.

According to the report, a portion of the DOE's technology development should focus on technologies that can substantially reduce schedules, risks, and uncertainties in the cleanup. The NASEM recommends that this effort be managed by the DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E), which it said has a record of investing in innovative solutions

for complex technical challenges. In addition, the DOE's Office of Environmental Management (EM) should implement a process for identifying, developing, and deploying new knowledge and technologies that can aid its cleanup efforts, the report says.

EM's management of science and technology development is ad hoc and uncoordinated, according to the report, with most development activities focused on individual sites, driven and managed by contractors, and having a short-term emphasis on addressing technical challenges in existing cleanup projects. EM should design and implement a science and tech-

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