

Where the Utilities Go

In the two-plus years that I've been editing *Radwaste Solutions*, I've attended a lot of meetings and conferences and have been able to follow remediation, cleanup, D&D, and waste management activities of government projects, as well as the decommissioning of nuclear power plants. But I had noticed a key absence in the programs of these meetings: Where were the operating utilities?

I must thank Clint Miller, from Pacific Gas & Electric, for enlightening me on this issue. The operating utilities indeed do not send many people to the standard waste conferences (the Tucson meeting, Spectrum, the ANS national meetings, the various waste topicals). Instead, the utilities all attend the annual Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Low-Level Waste Conference.

So, I added the EPRI conference to the list of meetings I should attend. The meeting this year, held in San Antonio, Tex., in July, gave me a chance to rub shoulders with the radwaste managers at operating nuclear power plants, as well as with the vendors who serve them. It was a refreshing experience.

There's a lot happening at the operating plants. These plants have been, and continue to be, making

great strides in reducing the volumes of radwaste generated each year and, in the process, reducing costs and increasing productivity. When problems crop up, they are dealt with—quickly, creatively, and effectively. Because utilities always have an eye on the bottom line, they cannot afford to bombard a problem with too many studies and theories. Rather, they must *solve* it. So, some cutting edge work is being done by these plants, and the EPRI Conference provides them with a forum to share the solutions and the lessons learned.

The cover stories in this issue, "The Search for Something Better: Improvements to Radwaste Processing at Oyster Creek," by Robert J. Artz and Robert J. Hillman (p. 9), and "The Electronic Teacher: Considerations for Implementation of a Computer-Based Training Program," by Mike Nolan (p. 16), were adapted from EPRI Conference presentations. I would like to thank Paul Williams, who serves as the technical program chair of the conference, and Sean Bushart, of EPRI's LLW division, for all their hard work in putting together this conference and for allowing *Radwaste Solutions* to reprint these articles.—Nancy J. Zacha, Editor



On the cutting edge with operating nuclear plants



Attendees learn about cutting edge work during the EPRI Conference poster session.