

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
RANKING MEMBER



SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN
OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS,
RANKING MEMBER

Nita M. Lowey
Congress of the United States

17th District, New York

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Stephen G. Burns
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
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Dear Chairman Burns,

As you may be aware, radioactive tritium-contaminated water was recently reported to have leaked into groundwater at the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, NY. Entergy, the plant's operator, notified the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) last week.

This is merely the latest in a long history of safety lapses that pose significant risks to the health and safety of families and businesses in the area. In early 2005, traces of strontium-90 and tritium were detected in the ground under Indian Point and in the Hudson River. In May 2014, two groundwater monitoring wells detected spikes in the tritium levels in groundwater and bedrock under the plant. It is unacceptable that these leaks continue to occur. The NRC must take steps to address these leaks and prevent further contamination.

I understand that Entergy has committed to installing a low-flow pumping system to decrease the local concentration of tritium, minimize the spread of tritium, and monitor the presence of tritium in the future. Given the continued tritium leaks and potential health and safety impacts, the NRC must take steps to expedite these improvements so that they are implemented well before the scheduled completion at the end of the summer of 2016.

As you know, the licenses for Units 2 and 3 have both expired. Despite decades of problems, which now include multiple tritium leaks, at Indian Point, the NRC continues to approve Entergy's requests for exemptions of safety regulations, while you consider the renewals of the two Unit licenses. Given this serious situation, I strongly urge the NRC to work with its relevant partners to thoroughly investigate the ongoing leaks at Indian Point to protect the health and safety of the public. I appreciate your attention to this pressing issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress