



**News from Beyond Nuclear**  
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Contact:

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Thursday, Dec. 10, 9-10:30am & 3:30-5:30pm, Friday, Dec. 11, 9am-4pm  
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## **Fermi 3 Opponents Reveal Serious NRC Concerns about DTE Mismanagement**

Monroe, MI—Opponents of the proposed new Fermi 3 atomic reactor ripped into legal arguments by Detroit Edison and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff that recent charges by the NRC of inadequate quality assurance (QA) cannot be put to a public hearing.

Citing multiple internal NRC staff emails, the environmental coalition revealed that several key NRC staff people have questioned whether Detroit Edison can truthfully guarantee that quality systems, structures and components would be built into the proposed Fermi 3 General Electric-Hitachi boiling water reactor. The intervenors have called upon NRC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board for a suspension of the construction and operating license application proceeding until such guarantees can be made.

The coalition submitted a 33-page declaration from Arnold Gundersen, a career nuclear engineer, who quoted internal NRC staff emails and analyzed the staff criticisms in light of federal requirements. One NRC quality assurance overseer stated, "At this time [June 4, 2009], the application is not providing an applicant's QA program for these activities as required by [Part] 52.79(a)(25) [of the NRC's regulations]." That same staffer said on June 8, 2009 that "This issue puts into question the quality of the overall application."

"This inadequacy of Detroit Edison's Quality Assurance Program cannot be repaired simply by a quick fix. This gaping hole in legally mandated QA must be addressed by the NRC and rectified by Detroit Edison. The only way to resolve this breach is to start over

with a fully implemented QA Program and go back and look at every analysis since 2007. The people of Michigan should not have to shoulder the cost of repeating these studies," said Gundersen, Chief Engineer for Fairewinds Associates, Inc.

"A quality assurance program has to start at the very beginning of the design for a huge project like Fermi 3," said Terry Lodge, attorney for the public intervenors. "The utility has to guarantee that they won't buy junk parts or electrical components from manufacturers who care about making a quick buck and don't care if the plant can perform properly in an emergency. This isn't just a 'paperwork' issue, it's about protecting the public's health and safety."

"Given that quality assurance is the very foundation upon which the entire Fermi 3 project is based, DTE might as well build this new atomic reactor on quicksand in terms of its environmental and radiological safety and its financial viability. This project places all parties in peril," added Keith Gunter of Beyond Nuclear who lives in Livonia, Michigan.

The environmental coalition opposing Fermi 3 includes Beyond Nuclear, Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination, Citizens Environmental Alliance of Southwestern Ontario, Don't Waste Michigan, and the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter. Its latest filing on December 8 is in response to arguments by both NRC staff and Detroit Edison's legal counsel, submitted December 1, for the QA contention to be rejected. The environmental coalition first raised its QA contention on November 6, 2009.

Documents associated with this intervention are posted at Beyond Nuclear's website, [www.beyondnuclear.org](http://www.beyondnuclear.org).

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Beyond Nuclear aims to educate and activate the public about the connections between nuclear power and nuclear weapons and the need to abandon both to safeguard our future. Beyond Nuclear advocates for an energy future that is sustainable, benign and democratic. The Beyond Nuclear team works with diverse partners and allies to provide the public, government officials, and the media with the critical information necessary to move humanity toward a world beyond nuclear.

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