



# TROUBLE on the WATER



## 829,000-Gallon Radioactive Leak & Xcel's Response Should Disqualify Monticello Nuclear Reactor License Extension

The nuclear weapons industry depends on nuclear reactors; the two have been inseparable since their inception. The U.S.'s 94 reactors are "the core foundation of the world's biggest bomb machine...they are, above all, military devices." - Harvey Wasserman. From the uranium mines all the way up the nuclear fuel chain, radioactive pollution poisons sacred lands and waterways and humans who rely on them for sustenance. After 70 years, there is still no safe solution for cleaning up or storing the hundreds of thousands of tons of radioactive waste, with more accumulating.

Experts, scientists, and economists tell us nuclear reactors are too expensive, too risky, and take too long to build, so they *cannot* be a climate solution. Instead, reactors guzzle billions of dollars in industry-lobbied subsidies and clog grid space needed for cheaper and safer solar and wind power.

### Stop Nuclear Madness

- **The Monticello reactor:** on the Mississippi River, 35 miles northwest of Minneapolis, owned by Xcel Energy, is 53 years old, among the three oldest in the U.S.
- **November 22, 2022: Xcel first reported it found leaked radioactivity in onsite groundwater.** The Xcel notice had no information about the volume, source, or radioactive isotopes in the leak, YET it claimed, "There was no impact on the health and safety of the public or plant personnel."
- Xcel later reported that about 400,000 gallons contaminated with high levels of radioactive tritium had leaked into the ground. One year later, this estimate was **more than doubled to 829,000 gallons.**
- **March 2023:** The public was informed of the tritium leak four months after it occurred. While this leak was kept secret by Xcel, the State of Minnesota, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Xcel applied for another **20-year operating license extension.**
- **May 15, 2024: NRC's Steven Koenick: We "do conclude there were some very low concentrations of tritium in the Mississippi River."**
- Minneapolis's website declares, "Our water comes from the Mississippi River. Roughly 21 billion gallons of water are pumped from the river each year, **57 million gallons of drinking water every day.**"
- **What disastrous reactor accident will come next?** Xcel said the leak was stopped, but admitted March 22, 2023 the first fix failed, spilling radioactive water a second time. Xcel applied to run Monticello for 80 years. It was designed to run for just 40 years. Many more age-related issues have been identified in the reactor. Monticello is the same design as reactors at Fukushima.
- **Public Comment:** Say NO! to deadly radioactivity harming our children, environment, drinking water, and food. Now is the time to stand up for putting public health before profits.

This radioactivity is a threat to the Mississippi River and the people and animals that rely on it. Breathing or drinking tritium during pregnancy is linked to cancers in newborns, loss of pregnancy, and birth abnormalities. Contaminated water used for irrigating crops causes tritium to enter the food chain – and us.

Tritium stays dangerous in the environment for over 100 years. There were at least five other cancer-causing chemicals in the leaked wastewater - the same poisons related to illnesses and deaths caused by nuclear disasters at Chernobyl and Fukushima.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Send your public comments opposing the license
- Find out how with this link or QR code:



[nukewatchinfo.org/monticello](http://nukewatchinfo.org/monticello)

**SCAN ME**