

# No volunteers for nuclear storage site

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

The price sounds good — \$40 million in incentives and 20 jobs. But so far no Michigan community has volunteered to be a storage site for low-level radioactive wastes.

"Some have asked for more information, but they made it clear they were not volunteering," said Beverly McAninch, the gubernatorial appointee who chairs a state advisory group called the Radioactive Waste Control Committee. She is a former mayor of Plymouth and state presi-

dent of the League of Women Voters. Five panel members spent their entire Wednesday evening listening to public questions, comments and impassioned arguments against nuclear energy in a hearing on the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

It was the fifth of six hearings the Public Health Department panel has held to find a voluntary recipient of radioactive wastes.

"WE ARE STUCK with this problem. We can't turn our back on it,"

## Murphy names new deputy exec

A retired General Motors executive, Kenneth Q. Burchill, 57, of Bloomfield Hills, is the new deputy Oakland County executive.

"I've asked him to accept this post and he has agreed to do so on a trial basis for six months," said County Executive Daniel T. Murphy. Burchill, who has been county personnel director since last April, will continue in that post so he can oversee several continuing projects, Murphy said. His appointment is effective immediately.

BURCHILL SUCCEEDS James B. Dunkel Jr., who retired Dec. 31.

In his deputy post, he will be responsible for county administration. Patrick Nowak continues as the second deputy executive in charge of planning and special projects.

Murphy said Burchill's goals as deputy executive will be improving the quality of work life and establishing a cooperative working relationship with the board of commissioners and other officials.

The board of commissioners came close to eliminating the deputy's job in its December budget meeting, barely passing it on reconsideration.

BURCHILL RETIRED from the No. 1 auto maker after 29 years. He was personnel and industrial relations manager for GM Egypt, near Cairo, and held a number of labor and human resources management posts in his career.

He holds two degrees from Michigan State University and graduated from the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., and from the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kans. He also recently retired as a U.S. Army reserve colonel.

said panel member William C. Taylor. He is a Michigan State University professor of civil engineering and former science advisor to ex-Gov. William G. Milliken.

"It's not our waste. It's Walter J. McCarthy's waste," replied Mary Johnston, a Farmington Hills resident and member of the Safe Energy Coalition of Michigan. McCarthy, of Birmingham, is board chairman of Detroit Edison Co., whose nuclear plants are a source of radioactive wastes.

And that was how it went all evening — the panel insisting there is a problem which federal law requires states to solve, Johnston and Jennifer Puntenev of Farmington Hills arguing against any use of nuclear power, calling the panel "apologists for the nuclear power industry" and interrupting panelists' answers 33 times.

THE PROBLEM was born when three states — Washington, Nevada and South Carolina — announced they would accept low-level radioactive wastes only until 1993.

Here is the history as outlined in a standard script and slide show from the regional commission:

The U.S. Congress in 1980 labeled it a state problem, giving states the options of joining regional compacts or solving it alone.

Michigan opted to join a Midwest compact with Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Indiana and Ohio. (Illinois joined with Kentucky.)

THE REGIONAL commission, with one member from each state, is to decide in March which state will serve as the regional collecting point



Beverly McAninch  
no takers

("host") for 20 years and which as the "successor" for 20 years.

McAninch said Michigan stands a good chance because it generates 33 percent by volume, and 41 percent

by radioactivity, of all LLRW in the region. Ohio ranks second at 19 and 25 percent respectively.

Added Taylor: "There is little doubt in my mind Michigan will be one of the four finalists."

GENERATORS OF the wastes are 2,300 companies and institutions licensed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

They will pay for disposal of their wastes, McAninch said. Electric power plants produce 75 percent of the LLRW in the form of resins, clothing, tools and reactor components. (Spent fuel and other high-level wastes are a federal responsibility.)

The remaining 25 percent is generated by manufacturing firms (for example, smoke detectors), research laboratories and hospitals using radiation for diagnosis and treatment.

"Even if we stopped future use of radioactive materials, we would still need a disposal site in the region, because of the need to dispose of waste from decommissioned nuclear power plants and other facilities that used radioactive materials," said

Fred Fear, staff member from MSU's department of resource development.

THE REGIONAL commission will levy a 25-percent surcharge on disposal fees to provide \$40 million in incentives over 20 years to the community which agrees to be a storage site. Target date is Jan. 1, 1993.

The storage facility, probably operated by a private contractor after competitive bidding, will provide 20 jobs with an annual payroll of \$400,000.

Two trucks a day will bring in wastes, to be stored in vaults or concrete canisters, Fear said.

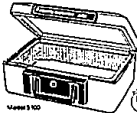
The NRC says radiation exposure to a person living at the edge of the 200-acre site should be limited to 0.25 rems (a measure of radioactivity) a year.

The Michigan panel said its goal is a limit of 0.01 rems.

In contrast, a typical American is exposed to 0.20 rems a year from the environment. A dental X-ray is 0.040 rems; a chest X-ray, 0.025 rems.

The ideal site will be an inland tract of state land with road access.

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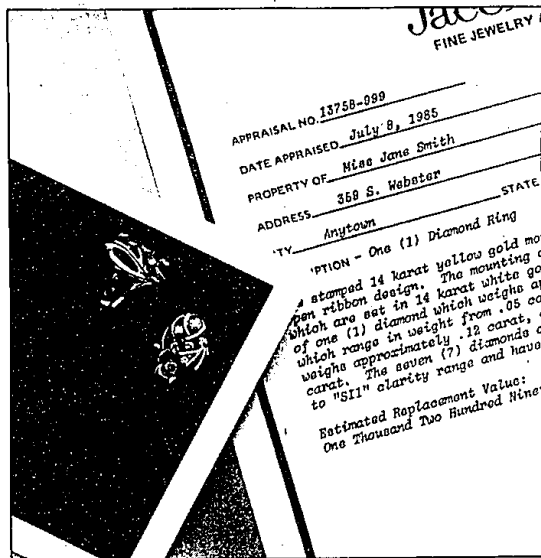
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