

**Statement of Steven P. Kraft**  
**Senior Director, Used Fuel Management**  
**Nuclear Energy Institute**  
**Transportation and Storage Subcommittee**  
**Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future**  
**August 19, 2010**

The nuclear energy industry supports a three-pronged, integrated used fuel management strategy:

1. interim storage of used fuel at centralized, volunteer locations
2. research, development, demonstration and deployment (at the appropriate time) of advanced technologies to recycle nuclear fuel
3. development of a permanent disposal facility.

As of June 2010, commercial nuclear power plants have permanently discharged 63,700 MTU (metric tonnes uranium) used fuel with 49,100 MTU stored underwater in pools and 14,600 MTU in dry storage systems. Over the past 12 and one half years, the Department of Energy (DOE) should have removed 25,500 MTU used fuel from our sites and be continuing to move an additional 3,000 MTU per year.

Used fuel storage at nuclear plant sites is safe, secure, and closely regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission whether in pools or dry storage systems. However long such storage might last, storage at power plants was to be only a temporary measure until DOE finally lived up to its obligations under the Standard Contract and removed the used fuel.

Centralized interim storage is as a strategic element of a used fuel management system that would provide a safe, secure, near-term solution for consolidating used fuel from shutdown commercial reactor sites and storing used nuclear fuel away from operating sites. The centralized interim storage facility should be licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, take advantage of past projects, as warranted, and be deployed in a region where it has broad-based public and political support. In addition, centralized interim storage:

- could be used by the federal government to meet its statutory and contractual obligation to accept and remove used nuclear fuel from reactor sites while reducing or eliminating the liability for taxpayers.
- would be a complementary, near-term element of disposal, and recycling and other advanced fuel cycle technologies, providing a "breather" while these other systems and facilities are being developed.
- would reduce public concerns regarding the accumulation of used nuclear fuel at operating and shutdown reactor sites and bolster public confidence by demonstrating the ability of the federal government to effectively manage commercial used fuel.
- should provide a location for the industry-government joint research and development program that will develop a better understanding of dry storage beyond 120 years (see EPRI and Nuclear Regulatory Commission statements).

Within the federal government, inconsistency in the approach to managing used nuclear fuel and a lack of policy and management accountability have impeded the ability to build political consensus on this issue and pursue needed used fuel management projects. We have all learned the primary lessons for the failure of central storage projects in the past. To be successful, a central interim storage project must be carried out under a durable federal policy, in a willing community and state, preferably as a private venture with an independent federal corporation as its primary customer.