



# TOWN OF ORLEANS

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SELECT BOARD

TOWN  
ADMINISTRATOR



January 18, 2022

Michael S. Regan, Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of the Administrator, 1101A  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

The Town of Orleans Select Board at their meeting today, voted to go on record as opposing Holtec International's plan to discharge one million gallons of radioactive water from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station's reactor vessel and spent fuel pool into Cape Cod Bay.

As a community located along Cape Cod Bay with 6,307 year-round residents and 19,000 seasonal residents and visitors, we are very concerned about the potential adverse impacts Holtec's proposed action would have on our residents' public health, the environment, and the local economy.

Designated as a State Ocean Sanctuary in 1970, Cape Cod Bay is recognized for its ecological diversity and significance. Its marine and coastal habitats support many commercially important fish and shellfish species, as well as state and federally listed birds and marine mammal species. In late winter and spring, the bay serves as a rich feeding ground for the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale.

Yet Cape Cod Bay's ecological bounty also underscores its environmental fragility. Cape Cod Bay is unique in that it is a semi-enclosed embayment that is not conducive to dilution and disbursement of pollutants. The cumulative effects of radiation combined with the enclosed nature of the bay translate into too many unknown risks to make the proposed discharge acceptable. From a human health perspective, the potential for bioaccumulation of radiation in shellfish and finfish that are used as food sources is of great concern to us. These health concerns also translate into potential threats to our coastal economy, with ramifications for our commercial fisheries as well as the many businesses that rely on tourism dollars.

Discharging the contaminated water into Cape Cod Bay is not the only option available to Holtec. Instead of releasing the water into the bay, the company has other alternative actions to take that include storing the water at the site, employing evaporation, or trucking the water to another location. There is too much at stake to gamble with the health of the region's environment and its residents by permitting Holtec to use Cape Cod Bay as its dumping ground simply because it is cheaper for the company to do so.

We therefore state our strong opposition to any plans by Holtec International to discharge water containing radiation or other contaminants into Cape Cod Bay.

Sincerely,

Mefford Runyon, Chair  
Select Board

# TOWN OF ORLEANS

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