

Radioactive Clearance; A Pressure Groups Perspective

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Santa's nuclear waste grotto



A Santa's grotto used by hundreds of children in the run up to Christmas was made of containers used to store nuclear waste, it has been revealed...

Risk...is it real or imagined?

- “Santa’s Grotto” had been made from iso-containers used for LLW
- They had been thoroughly decontaminated
- They had been checked before leaving the site.
- They were clean
- **SO WHAT’S YOUR PROBLEM???**

Are people worried because...

- They're frightened of things they don't understand (and they don't understand radioactivity)?
- The press has whipped up public fears?
- They are luddites seeking to stop progress?

Or are they worried because?

- There is ample evidence of a cavalier attitude within the nuclear industry?
- The secrecy which has surrounded the development of the nuclear industry has encouraged cover-ups?
- They know that really, really stupid accidents have happened in the past?

Well big deal...but what does this have to do with site clearance

- Perception is reality.
- People are concerned about the use to which recovered materials may be put.
- People are not convinced that the nuclear industry can either decontaminate effectively or measure levels of contamination
- There is no actual need to clear sites...they will, in any case, remain radioactive for a long, long time.

Golden rules

- Only release materials which have only ever been very lightly contaminated
- Ask...does this really need to leave the site (or can it be stored at the nearest nuclear site?)
- Ensure quality control procedures for further decontamination and radioactive assay
- ENCOURAGE WHISTLEBLOWING
- Ensure recovered materials are used for industrial, not public purposes

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