



Public Watchdogs

NRC denies independent public oversight after "near-miss" nuclear disaster at San Onofre

[Public Watchdogs protests NRC malfeasance](#) at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

Dateline: September 7, 2018, San Diego -- Today, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) -- the only agency allowed under U.S. law to regulate the safety of deadly nuclear waste -- denied the public access to its evaluation of what it calls a "near-miss" at SONGS, the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station on August 3.

On Monday, NRC staff will conduct an [alleged "inspection"](#) of the SONGS nuclear facility. The inspection was prompted after workers at the failed nuclear reactor nearly dropped a 105,000 pound can of nuclear waste almost 18 feet.

The non-profit group Public Watchdogs is concerned that an 18 foot drop -- or even a drop of a few inches -- could have precipitated a regional nuclear disaster requiring the evacuation of nearby communities.

The NRC's "alarming secrecy."

"The public was not informed of this near-miss nuclear disaster," says Nina Babiarz, a public advocate at Public Watchdogs. "We believe the public has a right to know when the public's safety is put at risk. Southern California Edison waited several days before it reported the event to the NRC. The alarming secrecy of the NRC and its slow response is troubling. We are deeply disturbed that it took more than a month for the NRC to put boots on the ground. What are we paying them for?"

In a [letter](#) sent Friday afternoon to the NRC's Region IV Deputy Director, Public Watchdogs expressed concern that the NRC is improperly allowing Edison to take full control over the NRC inspection. [A copy of the letter is available on the Public Watchdogs website.](#)

According to Public Watchdogs executive director, Charles Langley, "We want to be assured that the NRC, not Edison, is in control of this investigation. Right now it appears that Edison is directing the NRC's activities and inspections."

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