SONGS Community Engagement Panel Meeting
SONGS Spent Fuel: Onsite Storage and Initiative to Relocate Offsite
16 October 2025

Key Takeaways

The seminar focused on SCE's efforts to provide for the safe onsite storage of spent nuclear fuel, the role of canister inspections, and how inspections have confirmed canisters remain in good condition. After a challenge by the CEP on Aug. 28 to release all inspection photographs, SCE agreed to do so, building trust by making more than 1,700 images available on the SONGS website. The seminar also highlighted SCE's initiative to clear San Onofre of spent fuel.

A comprehensive discussion covered a defense-in-depth strategy for onsite storage including design, fabrication, operations, inspections, and repair. During a deep dive on inspections, an SCE engineer reviewed dozens of canister images and explained areas of interest including buffing and fabrication marks, dust, stains, rub marks, scratches, and streaking from dried rainwater. Third party expert Dr. James Burns – whose award-winning work has been recognized by NASA and the federal government – provided background on corrosion an independent assessment that no canister images show evidence of corrosion.

In the event canister repair is ever needed in the coming years and decades, SCE has a metallic overlay repair method at the ready. At the same time, it was explained that safety scenarios have been rigorously analyzed under NRC regulations and industry programs, and there are no credible accidents at SONGS that result in an offsite release of radiological material.

SCE assured the spent fuel is actively monitored and safely stored. Still, the CEP has asked for updates on future inspections, the next of which will take place in late 2026.

The CEP discussion covered the federal government's failure to comply with its legal and contractual obligations related to spent fuel which have resulted in the need for onsite storage. SCE released the "Strategic Plan for the Relocation of SONGS Spent Nuclear Fuel to a Federal Storage or Disposal Facility" in 2021. At the same time SCE teamed with local governments to form the Spent Fuel Solutions coalition that supports efforts to clear all US plant sites of spent fuel including SONGS. Coalition Co-Chairs, San Diego County Supervisor Jim Desmond and Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley, were recognized for their leadership.

Shareables

- See for yourself all images from spent fuel inspections at SONGS
- Learn about inspection and maintenance of the spent fuel storage systems
- Join the Spent Fuel Solutions coalition and support efforts to clear San Onofre of spent fuel
- Request a SONGS walking tour
- Get informed by exploring www.SONGScommunity.com