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## In Case You Missed It: DEP is Right to Insist on Cleanup of Tritium at Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant

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Star-Ledger Editorial Board  
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The state Department of Environmental Protection has rightly ordered the Exelon Corp. to clean up radioactive contamination that leaked into the groundwater under its Oyster Creek nuclear power plant.

More than a year ago, Exelon discovered that water containing tritium had leaked from holes in two pipes at the 41-year-old plant in Lacey Township. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission investigated but did not require a cleanup. Now the state Department of Environmental Protection has stepped in to make sure the contamination does not threaten drinking water.

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Neil Sheehan, a spokesman for the NRC, says it would take years for the contaminated water to reach the nearest drinking water wells a couple of miles away.

That didn't satisfy the DEP. Commissioner Bob Martin has ordered Exelon to install new monitoring wells to better measure the extent of the contamination and come up with a plan to keep it from spreading. The state says if Exelon does not clean up the tritium, it will, and sue the company for triple damages.

While there is no immediate threat to drinking water, there's no reason to wait until it becomes a more serious problem. Exelon needs to get to cleaning.

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