

Update from your Representative to the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission

The Cape Cod Light:

The Cape Cod Lighthouse needs more than a coat of paint due to spalling. Currently, the National Park Service is conducting a structural engineering study of our Highland Light. Its investigation has determined that when the current lighthouse was built in 1857 to replace the original lighthouse, it was constructed with three walls of bricks. Space was left in between each wall for ventilation, and additional ventilation measures were incorporated. In 1996, as the light was being prepared for a move inland from the eroding cliff, the Coast Guard thought it would be best to stabilize the structure by adding mortar between the walls. Unfortunately, this added mortar prevented the wicking away of moisture from the bricks. Over the last 20 years that created damage to parts of the metal structures, which compromised the integrity of the building. These issues are being addressed. Our park Superintendent George Price hopes tours will be permitted again this Summer

Emergency Planning for the Cape:

The Barnstable County Regional Emergency Planning Committee recently made available a reference sheet for Cape Cod citizens advising what procedures to follow in case of a radiological accident at the Plymouth Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station. The only way to be safe from exposure to deadly radioactive releases onto the shores of Cape Cod Bay is to get away from the plume. During the Fukushima Daiichi disaster in Japan, American citizens living within the 50-mile radius of Fukushima were advised to evacuate.

Because it is understood that people on the Cape and Islands will not be able to evacuate in such an emergency, the Massachusetts Emergency Planning Agency plan directs us to shelter *in place*, which provides 10 to 40 percent protection in a home for only two hours. There is no protection for people outdoors or in their cars, nor are there designated shelters on the Cape. The additional protective measure is to take potassium iodide pills to prevent radioiodine absorption by the thyroid gland for a chance to prevent thyroid cancer

from exposure to a radioactive plume carried on the wind across the Bay. Children are especially vulnerable to such exposure to radioiodine.

These pills are available free of charge from our Town Health Agent Pat Pajaron at Town Hall. Although we strongly recommend all our citizens to have these potassium iodide pills, it should be understood there are many other deadly isotopes with long half-lives that could be released in a radioactive plume. We have no protection from these additional cancer-causing isotopes.

Diane Turco of *Cape Downwinders* recently wrote, "We the public are offered medication by the Government in support of an industry which threatens our community on a daily basis." Evacuation is the first line of protection, and that is not going to happen here on the Cape. Rather than sitting by passively why don't we all work to have Pilgrim decommissioned to remove the threat to public health and safety?

The Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission has added its support to pending legislative efforts by Representative Sarah Peake and Senator Dan Wolf. These efforts, noted in a letter to the Governor, call for the expansion of the emergency planning zone beyond the current 10-mile radius from the plant to include all of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket counties. It is the responsibility of the Governor and the Government to protect the public's health and safety.

Maureen Burgess