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HOLTEC'S EXPERTS WARN PALISADES WILL FAIL BEFORE NEXT REFUELING OUTAGE

***Nuclear Engineer Gundersen Questions Adequacy of Inspections,
Warns Historic Regulatory Retreat Risks Radioactive Catastrophe***

COVERT TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN and ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND, APRIL 2, 2026--Holtec International's own nuclear engineering contractor, [Framatome, on March 19, 2026 admitted in a report](#) that an environmental coalition's years-long warnings have been correct: the soon to restart Palisades atomic reactor cannot operate more than 14.5 months, without "*the Probability of Burst*" of dangerously degraded, safety-critical steam generator tubes "*exponentially*" increasing.

Arnie Gundersen, a nuclear engineer with 55 years of relevant experience, documented Framatome's admission in [a white paper published today](#) entitled "The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Double Standard: A Historical Overview of NRC's Inspection Requirements at Millstone 1, Turkey Point, and Holtec's Palisades." Gundersen's detailed report, including analysis based on his own direct professional experience, warns that nuclear power safety regulation has been dangerously weakened over the past half-century, risking dire consequences for the Great Lakes State, given Palisades' impending, unprecedented restart. Gundersen's report, along with [a cover memo prepared by the Don't Waste Michigan, et al., environmental coalition's co-counsel](#), was sent today to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Palisades Restart Panel staff at the agency's Midwest/Region III headquarters near Chicago.

"You know things are really bad when Holtec's own contractor, Framatome's, analysis shows that, if Palisades is allowed to restart, the steam generators will degrade quickly. Framatome used 50,000 computer runs to try to get a better result, but has determined that Palisades cannot operate safely

even after just the first 14.5 months. Holtec's contractor admits the likelihood of damage will increase 'exponentially' after that point if Palisades is restarted," said Gundersen.

"All the king's horses, and all the king's men, cannot put Humpty Dumpty back together again," said Michigan J. Keegan of Monroe, chair of Don't Waste Michigan's board of directors. "How can Holtec, the State of Michigan, and the federal government justify the waste, fraud, and abuse of [\\$3.12 billion in taxpayer bailouts](#) for a mere 14.5 months of exponentially risky restarted reactor operations?", Keegan added.

"Missed layups at the NCAA March Madness basketball tournaments may be one thing, but Holtec's botched layups at Palisades could yet cost us the Great Lakes," said Kevin Kamps, executive director of Don't Waste Michigan, based in Kalamazoo, just 35 miles downwind of Palisades. Kamps was referring to [Holtec's neglecting to implement basic, essential, so-called "wet layups"](#) -- precautionary chemical preservation of safety-critical systems, structures, and components such as steam generator tubes and reactor vessel closure head penetrations -- for two long years after taking over at Palisades, from 2022 to 2024, resulting in extensive, costly, risky damage.

Gundersen has dubbed such Holtec mistakes as "rookie errors" -- the company has never operated nor repaired a reactor. He has previously predicted that a highly likely post-restart steam generator tube leak or rupture would release a certain amount of hazardous ionizing radioactivity into the environment. He also warned that a cascading, simultaneous failure of enough steam generator tubes would lead to a reactor core meltdown, with [potentially catastrophic radiological impacts on human health and the environment downwind and downstream](#).

A 1982 NRC report (Calculation of Reactor Accident Consequences, also known as the Sandia Siting Study or NUREG/CR-2239) calculated that a reactor core meltdown at Palisades would cause a thousand acute radiation poisoning deaths, 7,000 radiation injuries, 10,000 latent cancer fatalities, and \$52.6 billion in property damage. After Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear catastrophe in 2011, [the Associated Press reported](#) that casualties near hypothetical American reactor meltdowns would now be proportionally worse due to population growth over the past several decades, due to more people living in harm's way. And adjusting for inflation, property damage due to a Palisades meltdown would now surmount \$175 billion.

[In 2022, Holtec predicted it could restart the closed Palisades reactor by mid-2024](#). However, Holtec's self-inflicted wounds -- steam generator tube degradation, as well as Primary Water Stress Corrosion Cracking of reactor pressure vessel nozzle safe ends -- have led to very significant and [costly](#) delays. Holtec's safety-significant stumbles have exacerbated serious, persistent, and worsening problems that date back at least two decades, as [admitted to by Palisades' original owner, Consumers Energy, in testimony to the Michigan Public Service Commission in spring 2006 \(see page 2\)](#).

In addition, the environmental coalition (Beyond Nuclear, Don't Waste Michigan, Michigan Safe Energy Future, Nuclear Energy Information Service of Chicago, and Three Mile Island Alert of Pennsylvania) opposing Holtec's Palisades schemes, represented by attorneys Terry Lodge and Wallace Taylor, have filed for an injunction against the reactor restart in federal district court in western Michigan. Chief U.S. District Judge Hala Y. Jarbou has denied Holtec's motion for summary dismissal, and set various filing deadlines for June and July. Meanwhile, numerous coalition appeals against NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board rulings, regarding safety, health, and environmental matters, have remained unresolved for years at the NRC Commission, comprised of the agency's five directors. Gundersen has served as an expert witness for the coalition in NRC licensing proceedings over the past several years.

"Our coalition's warnings have been vindicated. Holtec's nuclear engineering contractor Framatome has placed its bet, in writing, that Palisades won't catastrophically blow if operated 14.5 months or less," said attorney Terry Lodge. "We now all seem to agree Palisades can't be operated for very long at all after its restart, without further inspections, tube repairs, and, truth be told, very long overdue complete steam generator replacements, [costing more than \\$500 million, according to Holtec's own 2022 estimate](#). This means Holtec's unprecedented 'resurrection' of Palisades just got significantly more exorbitant, entirely at public expense. Where we appear to disagree is whether Holtec should be allowed to play radioactive Russian roulette with our lives and livelihoods, while the government pays for the diabolical game with unthinkably vast amounts of our hard-earned taxpayer and ratepayer dollars," Lodge added.

For more information, see Beyond Nuclear's "[Newest Nuke Nightmares at Palisades, 2022 to Present](#)". It is a one-stop-shop of web posts dating back to April 2022, when Holtec CEO Krishna Singh first floated "Small Modular Reactor" construction and operation at Palisades, and Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer first floated restarting the closed-for-good reactor.