

An Ethic of Nuclear Guardianship—*Values to Guide Decision-Making on the Management of Radioactive Materials*

1. Each generation shall endeavor to preserve the foundations of life and well-being for those who come after. To produce and abandon substances that damage following generations is morally unacceptable.
2. Given the extreme toxicity and longevity of radioactive materials, their production must cease. The development of safe, renewable energy sources and non-violent means of conflict resolution is essential to the health and survival of life on Earth. Radioactive materials are not to be regarded as an economic or military resource.
3. We accept responsibility for the nuclear materials produced in our lifetimes and those left in our safekeeping.
4. Future generations have the right to know about the nuclear legacy bequeathed to them and to protect themselves from it.
5. Future generations have the right to monitor and repair containers, and to apply such technologies as may be developed to protect the biosphere more effectively. Deep burial of radioactive materials precludes these possibilities and risks uncontrollable contamination to life support systems.
6. Transport of radioactive materials, with its inevitable risks of accidents and spills, should be undertaken only when conditions at the current site pose a greater ecological hazard than transportation.
7. Research and development of technologies for the least hazardous long-term treatment and placement of nuclear materials should receive high priority in funding and public attention.
8. Education of the public about the character, source, and containment of radioactive materials is essential for the health of present and future generations. This education should promote understanding of our relationship to the Earth and to time.
9. The formation of policies governing the management of radioactive materials requires full participation of the public. Free circulation of information and open communication are indispensable for the self-protection of present and future generations.
10. The vigilance necessary for ongoing containment of radioactive materials requires a moral commitment. This commitment is within our capacity, and can be developed and sustained by drawing on the cultural and spiritual resources of our human heritage.

The Nuclear Guardianship Ethic is proposed as an evolving expression of values to guide decision-making on the management of radioactive materials.

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