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# Selectmen deserve praise for foresight on radioactive waste

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Editor of The Register Citizen:

Members of the community may recognize a job well done by the Board of Selectmen of the town of Winsted. Winchester's board was way ahead of the game when it adopted a resolution in December 1990 prohibiting the disposal of low-level radioactive waste, or "BRC," in the regular waste stream — landfills, sewers, incinerators.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's policy permits the disposal of low-level radioactive waste, reclassified "Below Regulatory Concern," in the regular waste stream. You have not heard much about this policy because the Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires any generator of radioactive waste to apply for permission to dispose of its radioactive waste in this manner. The largest generator of radioactive waste, the nuclear industry, feels it already gets enough bad press without making things worse by applying for permission to throw out the radioactive stuff in the landfills.

The state of Connecticut initially involved itself in the BRC issue through the office of the attorney general. A lawsuit is proceeding against the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in which Connecticut and 15 other states have joined.

Consequently, the state passed legislation with support from the representatives from the 63rd District. On July 2, Gov. Weicker signed Public Act 91-92a, an act concerning low-level radioactive waste. This state law prohibits the disposal of low-level radioactive waste in municipal landfills and sewers contrary to the federal "BRC" policy.

The town's action, along with the efforts of many other towns and individuals, made our state legislators take notice of the serious health and environmental risks involved with the federal BRC policy. The action taken at the local and state level has triggered an examination of the BRC policy by federal legislators. Currently there are two bills in Congress which address the issue.

The Board of Selectmen deserve praise for having the foresight to take a stand against a policy obviously harmful to the environment and our health.

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