

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
September 2, 2008

For More Information:  
Paul Burns, VPIRG 223-8421 x 4095

### **VPIRG urges investigation of Vermont Yankee advertising as violation of state consumer fraud law**

The Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG) today called on Attorney General William Sorrell to launch a formal investigation into the paid advertising of Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee (ENVY) as a possible violation of a state law designed to protect consumers from fraudulent claims.

“The out-of-state owners of Vermont Yankee have demonstrated such a disregard for the truth that it amounts to a violation of state law,” said Paul Burns, executive director of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG).

VPIRG cited examples from ENVY’s paid ads that conflict with documented facts or common public perception. For example, ENVY repeatedly claims that the nuclear plant is “safe and reliable.” Yet, the recent operating track record of the plant is replete with accidents, mishaps and catastrophic failures. A partial list of recent problems at Vermont Yankee includes the following:

- Leak in water pipe and damaged brackets in areas that were inspected and rebuilt one year ago after a major cooling tower collapse; power output reduced to 47% of capacity (July, 2008)
- A defective pump prompted ENVY to reduce power to 93% (June 2008)
- Crane dropped a concrete storage cask, which carries highly radioactive spent fuel assemblies, four inches to the floor (May, 2008)
- During a planned April evacuation exercise, faltering two-way radios meant many buses were not dispatched to assisted living facilities and day care centers (May, 2008)
- Security violations in February cited by NRC (May, 2008)
- Condenser tube leak triggered plant shutdown (April, 2008)
- Stop valve malfunction triggers shutdown (August, 2007)
- Timber supporting water pipe gave way triggering catastrophic cooling tower section collapse (August, 2007)
- Cracks in steam dryer total 62 (as of November, 2005)
- Electric insulator breaks and causes shutdown (July, 2005)
- Malfunctioning emergency notification system (June, 2004)
- Major transformer fire led to emergency shutdown (June, 2004)

ENVY also claims that the nuclear plant produces “zero greenhouse gas emissions.” VPIRG disputes this claim, noting that significant greenhouse gas emissions are associated with mining, uranium enrichment, the building and decommissioning of nuclear plants, and processing and storing radioactive waste.

“Amid collapsing cooling towers, leaking pipes and transformer fires, this plant cannot honestly be called ‘reliable,’” said Burns. “Nor should any nuclear facility with the record of mismanagement that this one has be considered safe. And it is simply false to claim that a plant that produces as much global warming pollution as Vermont Yankee is clean, much less that it has zero greenhouse gas emissions.”

VPIRG noted in its letter that ENVY officials have in the past admitted that nuclear power produces greenhouse gas emissions. The letter goes on to state that, “Therefore, it is clear that not even ENVY believes its own claim of zero greenhouse gas emissions. Such a claim can only be interpreted as an intentional misrepresentation of facts designed to deceive the public.”

VPIRG urges Attorney General Sorrell to commence a civil investigation and take appropriate steps to protect the public from further deception on the part of ENVY.

As part of its advertising campaign, ENVY is urging Vermonters to contact their legislators in support of a 20-year license extension for the plant. A vote on the possible extension is expected in 2009 or 2010.

“Vermonters would be far better off if Entergy put all the money they’re spending on ads into hiring competent managers and engineers who can help to prevent the plant from falling apart until it retires in 2012,” said Burns.

###