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## Nuclear Energy Industry Whistle Blower Speaks Out

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## **Nuclear Energy Industry Whistle Blower Speaks Out**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Illinois Wesleyan University's Environmental Studies Program will host a talk by Oscar Shirani, a whistle blower for the nuclear energy industry. Shirani, a nuclear engineer employed for years by Exelon, one of the nation's most prominent nuclear plant operators, discovered nine flaws in a waste container currently used by the corporation to store radioactive waste at U.S. sites.

Shirani's talk "The Plain Truth About Exelon's Nuclear Reactor Program: a Former Exelon Auditor Speaks Out" will be on Sunday, Nov. 2, at 1 p.m. in the Center for Natural Science, in room C101, 201 Beecher St., Bloomington. The program is free and open to the public.

As Exelon's lead auditor, Shirani's audited companies with waste containers designed by Holtec International of New Jersey in 1997 and 2000 and revealed several design problems at these nuclear industry sites. Shirani brought his concerns to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in an attempt to have NRC compel the companies to comply with federal safety regulations.

In response, according to Shirani, he was forced out of Exelon and blacklisted by the industry.

Representatives of Holtec and Exelon have stated that they have responded properly to the audit findings; however, Shirani believes the problems he raised in the late 1990s have yet to be addressed by Exelon. In spite of his personal struggles with the industry, Shirani continues to fight for adequate safety standards at Exelon nuclear reactors. He will not only address his personal experiences with the industry, he will also describe the flaws with the design of the dry cask storage containers.

"In light of Exelon's recent Early Site Approval Application for a new nuclear reactor in Clinton, Ill.," said Abigail Jahiel, director of Environmental Studies Program at Illinois Wesleyan, "Mr. Shirani's talk is especially important and timely for central Illinois residents."