



## PUBLIC JUSTICE E-LERT

AMERICA'S PUBLIC INTEREST LAW FIRM

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Nothing man-made lasts forever. Especially not the country's oldest nuclear power plant. And, certainly not for two decades beyond its license.

Yet, in April of 2009, [Exelon Corporation](#) was granted a 20-year relicense for [Oyster Creek Nuclear Reactor](#) in Lacey Township, New Jersey. Wary experts and residents argued that the plant was never designed to operate that long. They said the effects on the local area, including neighboring Barnegat Bay, could be disastrous.

Now the environmental community has the validation it's been seeking: Late last week, Exelon, the nation's largest nuclear operator, agreed to [shut down Oyster Creek ten years ahead of schedule](#).

And we have Public Justice's own [Richard Webster](#) to thank.

"He's the one who made it happen," a [New Jersey Environmental Federation](#) representative said. "Richard litigated the contention accepted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

Since 2005, Richard has represented a coalition of citizen groups and environmental groups battling to shorten how long the nuke could carry on its risky operations.

His coalition argued that the [Nuclear Regulatory Commission](#) (NRC), which granted the 2009 relicense, did not correct known gaps in safety at the plant before relicensing, and the Chairman of the NRC agreed with them in a dissent. On appeal, they have shown that citizens were unlawfully prevented from raising critical safety issues such as metal fatigue of the reactor pressure vessel and the extent of the monitoring of the corroded containment system. The oral argument on those issues will be held before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in January.

But Christmas came early this year. Due in large part to Richard's efforts, the plant will close by 2019 at the very latest, and it could even be much earlier if the appeal succeeds. Exelon reps, worried about the cost to maintain Oyster Creek's aging machinery, have acknowledged just that.



[Exeloncorp.com/Oyster Creek Generating Station](http://Exeloncorp.com/OysterCreekGeneratingStation)

Congratulations and thanks to Richard Webster, Public Justice's Power-Cotchett Attorney. We're excited to see what news [our environmental team](#) brings in 2011.

And thanks to you too for helping make this important work possible.

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