

Insight

JUNE 2008

PHOTO COURTESY OF CONSTELLATION ENERGY



Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, center, tours the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant near Lusby, Md.

New Reactor Is 'Moral Imperative,' Says Md. Governor After Plant Tour

Seeing is believing for Maryland's governor. After touring the state's Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant, Gov. Martin O'Malley supports building an additional nuclear reactor at the site.

O'Malley, Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown and other state officials toured Constellation Energy's Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant in May, after which he shared his support for a third reactor at the site about 40 miles from Annapolis. Constellation submitted a license application for the reactor last July to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

"It is a huge moral challenge and it is a moral

imperative," O'Malley said when discussing the role of nuclear energy in reducing greenhouse gases. He believes the new reactor also will slow the rising rates consumers are paying for electricity.

In fact, the nuclear energy industry's average electricity production cost was 1.76 cents per kilowatt-hour in 2007, lower than other electricity-generating sources such as coal-fired plants at 2.47 cents/kwh and natural gas-fired plants at 6.78 cents/kwh.

Constellation hopes to begin construction of the new reactor by the end of the year. If the NRC approves the license application, the reactor would nearly double the plant's current generating capacity.

DOE Submits Yucca Mountain License Application

After 20 years of scientific research and extensive evaluation, the U.S. Department of Energy has submitted a license application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to construct the nation's first geologic repository for used nuclear fuel and high-level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

"This license application is the culmination of



SAMUEL BODMAN

more than two decades of expert scientific research and engineering and represents a major milestone for the department," said Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman.

Over the next three months, the NRC will conduct an initial review to determine whether to accept the 8,646-page application for formal review. After accepting the application, the agency expects to conduct the licensing process over a three- to four-year period, as required by law.

"Congress has given the NRC a strict timetable for reviewing this application, and I want to assure the American people that we will perform an independent, rigorous and thorough examination to determine whether the repository can safely house the nation's high-level waste," said NRC Chairman Dale Klein. "The NRC's licensing decision will be based entirely on the technical merits."

Skip Bowman, president and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Energy Institute, said filing of

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Yucca Mountain from page 1

this license application “continues down a path to properly meet our obligation to future generations to safely and reliably manage the byproduct of this highly efficient form of electricity production.”

The agency’s review will involve more than 100 NRC staff and contractor employees with expertise in geochemistry, structural geology, seismology, health physics and various engineering disciplines. The NRC’s Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards will conduct the licensing review.

“After years of debate, the suitability of the Yucca Mountain repository is now in the hands of the experts at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,” said Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.). “This action is consistent with the direction given by Congress and the president when the Yucca Mountain site was approved six years ago.”

DOE believes that submitting the license application will reinvigorate congressional support. “I believe they will be energized and very supportive because we’ve actually done this,” said Edward Sproat, director of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

Shortly after the filing, the state of Nevada filed a 23-page petition asking regulators to reject the license application. The state claimed that the DOE application is “unauthorized and legally deficient.” Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.) charged that the application “lacks critical information.”

Bodman said experts have assured him that both the scientific assessments of Yucca Mountain and the license application include sufficient, high-quality technical data. “I am confident that the application you see before you will stand up to any challenges from anywhere,” he said.

Wired: Nuclear Power One Way To Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Nuclear energy has enjoyed a long-running streak of positive coverage by mainstream media, and now journalistic brethren from unexpected sources are taking note and informing the public about the need for clean nuclear energy.

In its June issue, Wired magazine published an article entitled “Inconvenient Truths: Get Ready to Rethink What It Means to Be Green,” which explains that building nuclear power plants is one of 10 ways the world can dramatically reduce greenhouse gases.

Wired has long been a bastion of progressive thought. The magazine discusses how technology affects culture, politics and the economy.



“There’s no question that nuclear power is the most climate-friendly industrial-scale energy source,” Wired said. Although noting proliferation, used fuel disposal and cost issues, the article reaches this conclusion in the end: “Nukes win.”

Meanwhile, the traditional media continue their coverage of nuclear energy’s resurgence. “Conservation and green energy just aren’t enough to resolve our energy problems. What’s needed is a political commitment to nuclear,” Chicago Sun-Times columnist Steve Huntley wrote last month.

Rep. Bart Gordon (D-Tenn.), House Science and Technology Committee chairman, said the application submission is “long overdue.” The federal government was contractually required to accept used fuel rods from commercial power plants beginning in 1998. Utilities have filed more than 60 lawsuits against DOE for failure to begin accepting used fuel.

“Ratepayers have waited long enough for a federal repository to accept spent nuclear fuel,” said Rep. Phil Montgomery (R-Wis.).

State officials also responded favorably to the filing. “The federal government has a responsibility—to Connecticut and to the nation—

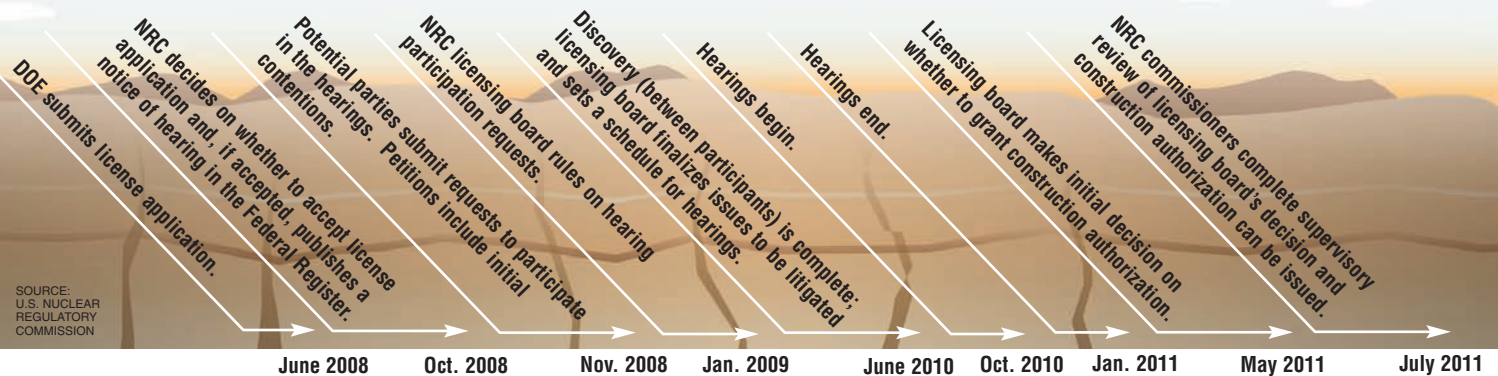
to see to it that these materials are stored safely, for the long term, and Yucca Mountain has long been identified as a place where that difficult but necessary job can best be accomplished,” said Connecticut Gov. Jodi Rell.

South Carolina Public Service Commissioner David Wright said the submittal “clears a long-awaited, crucial hurdle for the Yucca Mountain project and represents a significant milestone for energy and self-reliance, economic competitiveness, and environmental progress, as well as national security. This is classic case of the tortoise prevailing over the hare—and three decades of sound science and common sense outlasting politics and rhetoric.”



JODI RELL

Yucca Mountain License Review Timeline



SOURCE: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Industry Leaders Call for Action to Address Energy Goals

The push to increase the use of carbon-free energy technologies, coupled with unprecedented electric infrastructure needs, makes it imperative that private and public sectors rise to the challenge of building new nuclear plants, industry leaders say.

Skip Bowman, president and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Energy Institute, urged industry leaders at the 2008 Nuclear Energy Assembly to use facts to “fill the gaps” between reality and myths surrounding energy issues.

“We can fill the gaps between the scale of investment required to rebuild our electric infrastructure and state and federal policymakers’ perception of that scale,” Bowman said. “We have gaps between the policy support that will be required to meet electricity demand in a carbon-constrained world and what some federal and state politicians are currently prepared to provide.”

John Rowe, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Exelon Corp., said that building



new reactors is “not easy,” but the need for a substantial increase in carbon-free electricity generation makes it vital that industry and government meet the challenges ahead.

“We need 25 to 30 new nuclear plants just to start on the problem. To make a dent in carbon emissions, we need several times that.”

Citing the punishing economic impacts associated with America’s heavy reliance on natural gas in the electricity sector—including 118,000 jobs lost in the chemical sector—Jack Gerard, president and chief executive officer of the American Chemistry Council, urged that nuclear power play a greater role in the nation’s energy future.

Congress has presided over a U.S. energy policy that “doesn’t make sense,” Gerard told Assembly attendees. He pointed to the policy as responsible for the loss of “millions of good American jobs.”

Gerard said the nation’s energy and climate change policies should be “interwoven” and based on principles of diversity, efficiency and supply.

“How we produce and use energy has a big

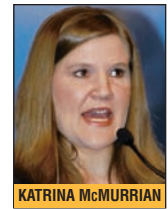


PHOTO BY ANNA GOMEZ

Jack Gerard believes U.S. energy and climate policy “must be developed comprehensively.”

impact on levels of greenhouse gas emissions,” he said. “That’s why energy and climate policy must be developed comprehensively. Unfortunately, Congress is developing energy and climate policy on separate tracks.”

Katrina McMurrian, a commissioner on the Florida Public Service Commission, said the growing importance of fuel diversity in the electric sector and nuclear energy’s low-carbon footprint are driving the industry’s resurgence in the Sunshine State.



Additionally, federal and state actions to curb greenhouse gases are prompting a re-examination of nuclear energy among regulators and lawmakers alike, McMurrian said. “Passage of some type of climate change bill seems to be a question of when—not if,” she noted.

Florida Gov. Charlie Crist has consistently supported nuclear and renewable energy sources to meet the state’s growing electricity needs and greenhouse gas emissions goals, McMurrian said. The Florida commission has affirmed this support in recent months. Companies and government officials share “a joint responsibility to make the nuclear renaissance work,” she added.

New Nuclear Plants Needed for Energy Independence, Says Senator

The United States needs large amounts of energy, and nuclear power is one way to answer that need, Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) told the Brookings Institution in May.

Alexander called for a bipartisan “Manhattan Project” to focus on a series of “grand challenges” that would “put America firmly on the path to clean-energy independence.”



“Instead of ending a war, the goal would be clean-energy independence so that we can deal with rising gasoline prices, electricity prices, clean air, climate change and national security,” Alexander said.

The senator offered seven issues that he

believed the nation should address in the next five years. One of those issues, Alexander said, is to recycle used nuclear fuel safely.

“Nuclear plants provide 20 percent of America’s electricity, but 70 percent of our clean electricity,” he said.

Recycling reactor fuel could reduce the volume of nuclear waste by 90 percent, so less waste would need to be managed in a repository. U.S. reactors use only about 5 percent of uranium fuel’s energy content before plants remove it.

“I think it’s important to realize that we’re not on some desert island,” he said, noting that the clean-energy needs of the country could not be met by solar and wind energy alone. “Nuclear is the way to do it.”

Wondering About Radiation? Head to Web for Answers

Can a radiation exposure be safe? Does your food become radioactive if it is irradiated?

These are among the questions individuals ask about radiation. A new Web site, Radiation - Answers, responds to these and other queries about radiation and its effects. The online resource is available at www.radiationanswers.org.

The Health Physics Society (HPS) spent more than a year creating the Web site aimed at educating the public about a wide variety of radiation issues. The society is a nonprofit professional organization that promotes excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety.

The site includes a Q&A section that discusses the effects of medical X-rays and products that emit radiation in your home.



The Health Physics Society's new Web site separates radiation myths from reality.

Radiation Answers also debunks some of the myths that arise from movies, television shows and other forms of media that sometimes give false information on the effects of radiation. The Web site has a link explaining basic information for those with no prior knowledge about the subject.

Developers of Radiation Answers remove the technical terminology and replace it with plain-English answers to questions pertaining to people's

everyday lives.

To ensure the technical accuracy of its online guide, HPS enlisted help from its members. A separate technical panel selected by the society's board of directors and a collection of advisory group members reviewed the content. The advisory group included representatives from the American Medical Association, the Natural Resources Defense Council and other scientific groups.

By the way, the answers to the questions are:

1. Radiation exposure can be safe. Medical procedures such as X-rays and normal background radiation from the sun are safe in low doses, according to the Web site.
2. Radiation Answers states that irradiated food does not become radioactive and there is no scientific evidence that harmful chemicals are formed during the process.

Experts Identify Challenges Ahead for Nuclear Renaissance

The resurgence of nuclear energy in the United States and around the world is real but requires continued diligence on a wide range of issues to ensure sustainable growth, a panel of experts said at the Nuclear Energy Institute's annual meeting.

An inexperienced construction management work force and a global supply chain could be a "chokepoint" for moving forward with new nuclear plants, said Michael Wallace, vice chairman of Constellation Energy and chairman of UniStar Nuclear Energy. Further, financing remains "an enormous challenge," he said.

William Johnson, chairman, chief executive officer and president of Progress Energy, said the Raleigh, N.C.-based company "stands at the center of reality and policy" as a fully integrated, regulated utility. He urged the industry to be "optimistic but realistic" about new reactor prospects.

For Ned Helme, the prospect of global warming legislation provides a "huge opportunity" for the



PHOTO BY ANNA GOMEZ

Global warming legislation could provide a "huge opportunity" for nuclear energy, said Ned Helme.

nuclear energy industry. Helme is president of the Center for Clean Air Policy, an organization that advises state, national and international policymakers on climate and air policy issues. "If we see carbon legislation, we will see more nuclear," he noted.

Robert Malone, chairman and president of BP

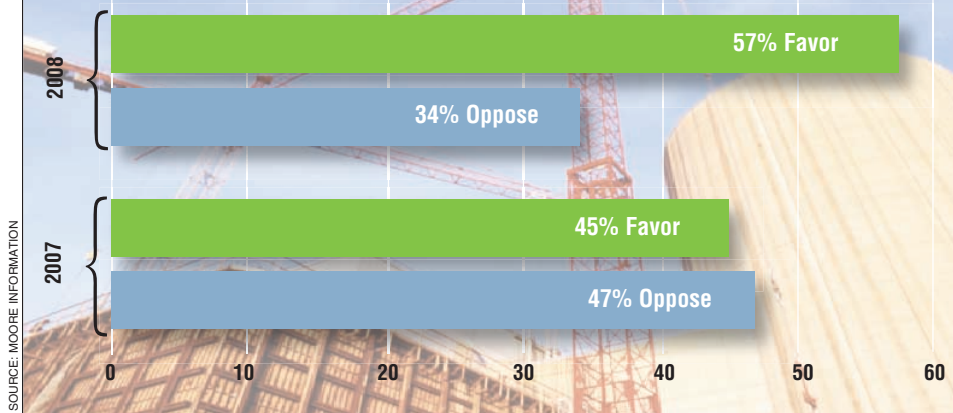
America Inc., provided a petroleum producer's perspective to the discussion. Nuclear energy has a role in any comprehensive policy, he said. "This country is going to need new nuclear power plants."

Jessica Tuchman Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said that nuclear power "could be an important part of energy supply for the United States and the world, but there are tough challenges ahead. Nuclear is not a silver bullet for global warming. If there is one, it's energy efficiency."

Mathews' concerns focused on several issues, including used fuel management, new-plant costs and proliferation. The latter seemed the thorniest for Mathews. She said that the global nonproliferation regime is "on the brink of collapse" and the first step to address this situation would be ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. However, she added, the world will need a new 100- to 200-year proliferation regime as well.

Public Consensus Builds for New Plants

"Would you favor or oppose building new nuclear power plants?"



Energy Prices, Climate Change Prompt Re-examination of Nuclear Energy

Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have consumers and policymakers alike thinking about nuclear power as part of the answer to climate change.

Two recent surveys conducted by the consulting firm Deloitte and another by Moore Information examined state regulator and public opinion about the future of nuclear power as electricity rates and oil prices escalate.

One of the Deloitte surveys asked 50 state public utility regulators about rising energy costs, preferences on emission-reducing technologies and predictions of consumer reactions to increases in electric rate hikes.

A majority of regulators surveyed said they anticipate the cost of electricity production will rise in the coming months. However, they also said they believed consumers would be willing to pay more for that electricity if it meant lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Some believed consumers would be willing to pay up to 15 percent more for their electricity.

A second survey, conducted by ICR for Deloitte, telephoned 1,000 adults nationwide asking questions on electricity rates, construction of new nuclear power plants and their preferences on new

technologies needed to meet rising electricity demand.

Fifty-three percent said they support the construction of new nuclear power plants. Of that total, almost 60 percent said they would be willing to have new plants built within 20 miles of their homes.

Seven in 10 consumers surveyed said they believe states need new regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; however, a large portion said they were unaware of any such laws in their own state. Nearly two-thirds are willing to pay 5 percent or more for electricity if it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In an April survey by Moore Information, U.S. voters were asked: "Nuclear power is one of the energy sources, like wind and solar energy, which does not contribute to global warming. After hearing this, would you favor or oppose building new nuclear power plants to generate electricity?"

A majority—57 percent—said they would favor such construction, while 34 percent were opposed. Just a year earlier, the survey found voters divided about building new nuclear plants, with 45 percent in favor and 47 percent opposed, according to Moore Information.

NEI to Report, Reduce Carbon Footprint

To improve its environmental stewardship, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) has joined a group of nonprofit, corporate and government entities that will voluntarily measure and publicly report their greenhouse gas emissions each year as a founding member of the Climate Registry.

NEI will work with First Environment, a consulting firm, to establish the carbon footprint associated with its Washington, D.C. offices, satellite offices, business travel, and conferences and events. NEI will then take action to reduce and mitigate that footprint.

The Institute will document its greenhouse gas measurements using the Climate Registry's general reporting protocol and independent verification. All reporters will measure greenhouse gas emissions based on the standards of the World Resources Institute and World Business Council on Sustainability, ensuring that the resulting data is accurate, consistent and of high quality.

"As a founding reporter of the reg-



SKIP BOWMAN

istry, we want to lead by example in demonstrating NEI's commitment to protecting the environment," said NEI President and Chief Executive Officer Skip Bowman.

The Climate Registry is a nonprofit organization established to measure and publicly report greenhouse gas emissions in a common, accurate and transparent way consistent across industry sectors and borders.

Thirty-nine U.S. states, six Canadian provinces, three American Indian tribes, two Mexican states and the District of Columbia are founders of the organization.



PG&E Plant Protects Rare Avian Species

When migrating birds collided with light poles in the parking lot at Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s Diablo Canyon power plant, employees knew where to turn for advice: the utility's Avian Protection Plan.

The plan, intended mainly for the utility's transmission and distribution network, is applicable wherever migratory bird routes cross PG&E facilities.

That's exactly what happened at the coastal California nuclear plant.

After about a dozen red-necked phalaropes flew into the light poles in recent years, Diablo Canyon

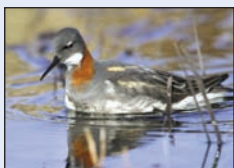
employees installed bird flight diverters on the poles. The diverters have the qualities needed to be effective: color and movement. The type installed at the nuclear plant consists of a swinging rectangular plate attached to a swivel.

The red-necked phalarope, protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, spends most of the winter at sea and then migrates to the Arctic in the spring. That is when the phalaropes pass through the Diablo Canyon plant site.

The bird diverters have significantly reduced the number of collisions. Since introduction of the diverters, only three birds struck light poles at the plant.

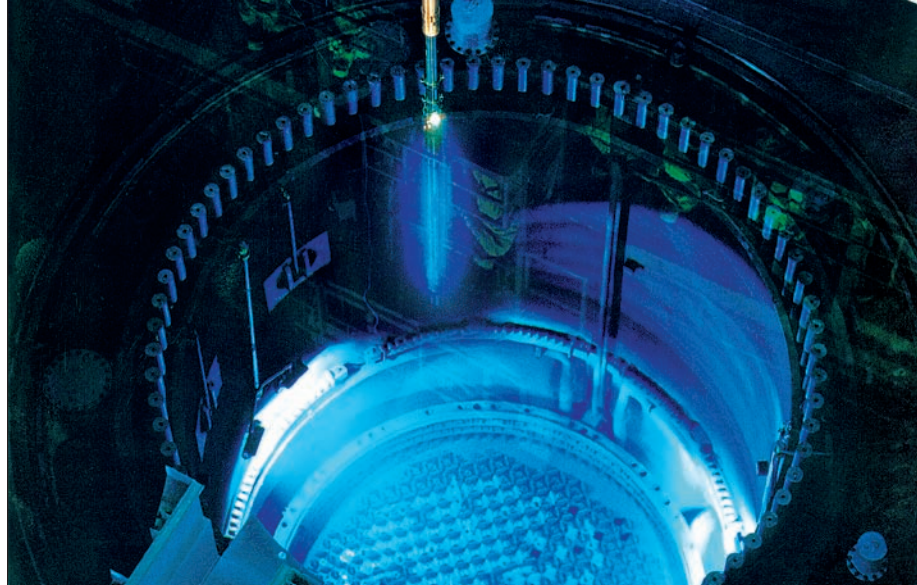
Under the utility's Avian Protection Plan, PG&E must report all collisions to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The plan also guides plant employees when they are working around raptor nests in towers at Diablo Canyon.

PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE



Red-necked phalarope

employees installed bird flight diverters on the poles. The diverters have the qualities needed to be effective: color and movement. The type installed at the nuclear plant consists of a swinging rectangular plate attached to a swivel.



Companies Plan U.S. Uranium Enrichment Facilities Ahead of Nuclear Resurgence

Nuclear power plants use uranium as fuel to produce electricity. However, before its use in a reactor, a series of processing steps converts mined uranium ore into ceramic uranium pellets.

One of those steps is enrichment, which boosts the fuel's potency. With 17 companies pursuing license applications for as many as 31 new reactors, enrichment companies expect an increased demand for their services and have multiple construction projects under way across the nation.

LES is already building the National Enrichment Facility in New Mexico. At full capacity, the plant will provide approximately 5 percent of America's energy needs. LES officials expect the plant to begin operation next year.

Idaho will host AREVA Inc.'s new uranium enrichment facility, the company announced in May. The site, near Idaho Falls, is close to the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Lab.

AREVA selected the site after an extensive technical, environmental and socioeconomic analysis of several potential locations. The company now will seek all necessary approvals from federal, state and local agencies, including a license from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to build and operate the facility.

"The United States needs more clean energy to support its economic growth," said Michael McMurphy, president of AREVA Inc. "To enable us to meet those needs we have to expand our

domestic nuclear infrastructure, secure supply of enrichment services and reduce our reliance on foreign imports. This new enrichment plant is a critical part of this process."

Other companies are making progress on new enrichment facilities, too. The demonstration of a cutting-edge uranium enrichment technology is delivering consistent results and boosting confidence in its performance and reliability, USEC executive John Welch told shareholders in May.

USEC is building the American Centrifuge Plant in Ohio, where the technology will be deployed. The company finalized the initial design for its enrichment machines, known as AC100s, in March. It expects to begin integrated testing next spring.

A subsidiary of GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy (GEH) has selected the company's Wilmington, N.C., headquarters site for a potential commercial uranium enrichment facility.

Under a 2006 agreement with the original developer, Australian company Silex Systems Ltd., GEH has exclusive rights to develop, commercialize and launch the third-generation uranium enrichment technology.

Before moving ahead with full-scale production plants, Global Laser Enrichment will first evaluate the results of a demonstration project, currently under construction. In mid-May, the NRC approved the company's application for a license amendment to operate the demonstration project.

Nuclear Plant Employees Recognized for Innovative Practices

What does it take to be the nuclear energy industry's best innovator? The employees of the South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Co. know.

This year marked the third time in seven years that South Texas Project has taken home the B. Ralph Sylvia Best of the Best Top Industry Practice (TIP) award. The Sylvia trophy is the highest award given in the TIP program, which recognizes industry employees in 15 categories for innovations that improve safety, efficiency and nuclear plant performance.

The industry honored the company's workers in May for their success in improving safety and lowering operational costs through their development and application of risk-management techniques to the power plant's technical specifications program. A technical specification is an explicit set of requirements or standards that a plant must meet to continue operating.

South Texas Project established a multi-disciplinary team with personnel from more than seven departments to create a process to implement the program. Through the program, the team identified significant improvements in safety, equipment reliability, maintenance, operations and production. The company also identified cost savings of \$2 million per year—potentially \$80 million over a power plant's 40-year license term.

Workers at Exelon Corp. nuclear power plants won six TIP awards. Exelon Nuclear corporate support and Byron power station employees were recognized for a sampling technique used in the plant's reactor.

Exelon employees at the Quad Cities power plant received an award for solving vibrations in the main steam line that would have impaired their ability to increase power output. Exelon Nuclear corporate employees were recognized for developing a system to effectively monitor plant system performance and equipment.

The company's employees at the Dresden power plant won an award for developing movable 86-ton radiation shield walls that facilitate maintenance and reduce radiation exposure. Meanwhile, employees at Exelon's Three Mile Island power



PHOTOS BY ANNA GOMEZ

The South Texas Project team won the industry's highest TIP award for the third time in seven years.

plant received an award for a special device that allows water line repairs while the facility continues to operate.

Exelon Generation Co. and Westinghouse Electric Co. employees also were recognized with an award for steps taken to prevent cracks in pressurized water reactors at the Byron and Braidwood stations.

Employees at Exelon's Limerick power station received a special Vision and Leadership Award for an environmental project that uses groundwater

held in coal mining sites to offset its water needs while helping to protect community supplies. The River Restoration and Monitoring Fund created by the team helps to clean up acid mine drainage from abandoned coal mines and provides funding for local and statewide water management and water quality improvement programs in Pennsylvania.

Dominion Generation workers at the Millstone plant won three TIP awards for a component nozzle examination technique, a transparent hands-on training model of a pressurized water reactor and a method that protects steam generators from corrosion.

Entergy and Global Nuclear Fuel-Americas employees earned an award for their strategic collaboration to enhance fuel reliability in the company's boiling water reactors, while First-Energy won for its state-of-the-art electronic circuit board testing laboratory.

Tennessee Valley Authority employees at the Watts Bar nuclear plant won for their zinc application that reduced problems created by excess corrosion buildup in the pressurized water reactor.

Omaha Public Power District employees at the Fort Calhoun power station received an award for managing major nuclear refurbishments, including replacing the steam generators, reactor vessel head, low-pressure turbines and main steam piping, during an 85-day refueling outage.



Joe Sheppard, president and chief executive officer of STP Nuclear Operating Co., cradles Best of the Best trophy.

Fission and Fishin' Meet at Nuclear Plant's Charity Tournament

A record-setting 184 anglers raised \$26,000 for charity this month during Exelon Nuclear's seventh annual Fishing for a Cure tournament at Lake Braidwood in northern Illinois.

The event, held June 2, benefited the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network. The nonprofit organization raises public awareness, provides advocacy and education, and strives to advance research on behalf of those affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis. More than 12 million Americans have food allergies, among them 3 million children. There is no known cure for food allergies; strict avoidance of the food allergen is the only way to prevent a reaction.

Each year, Braidwood employees select the tournament's charity recipient. Two Illinois anglers won the \$4,000 first-place prize after catching 8.15 pounds of fish in the lake near Exelon's Braidwood nuclear plant. Nine other teams shared the remaining \$6,000 in prize money.

Organizers also held a children's fish derby as



PHOTO COURTESY OF EXELON CORP.

Anglers enjoyed a day on Lake Braidwood during Exelon Nuclear's Fishing for a Cure tournament.

part of the event. More than 50 young anglers participated in the derby.

In its first seven years, Exelon Nuclear's Fishing for a Cure tournament has raised nearly \$110,000 for charity. Among the recipients were the Cystic

Fibrosis Foundation (\$7,500), Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Center (\$13,000), Multiple Sclerosis Society (\$16,000) and Make-a-Wish Foundation of Illinois (\$20,400).

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Insight

Editor JoAnn Sperber	Graphic Designer Rafy Levy	Photographer Anna Gomez	Alice Clamp
Editorial Specialist Michael Fauver	Illustrator Calvin Haden	Contributing Editors Richard Bickers	Mark Flanagan
			Lynne Neal
			Deanne Perez

Nuclear Energy Insight is published monthly by the Nuclear Energy Institute for policymakers and others interested in nuclear issues. NEI is the policy organization of the nuclear energy industry. © 2008

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