

Insight

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007



ARTIST RENDERING COURTESY OF DOMINION

Dominion would build North Anna 3 near the two existing reactors at the site, as seen in this artist rendering. Together, the three reactors would generate more than 3,000 megawatts of electricity.

Two Reactor Applications Filed With NRC

New Approach Leverages Standardization

Two more companies have submitted license applications for new nuclear reactors, bringing the total number now under U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission review to four, including an application from NRG Energy Inc. in August and a partial application from UniStar Nuclear in July.

Dominion filed an application with the NRC to build a third reactor at its North Anna site in central Virginia. This is the first combined construction and operating license (COL) application based on General Electric's 1,520-megawatt ESBWR reactor design. In October, NuStart Energy—a consortium of 10 companies—and the Tennessee Valley filed the first application based on the Westinghouse AP1000 reactor design, for two reactors at TVA's Bellefonte site in Alabama.

"As the third complete license application for a new nuclear power plant submitted in less than three months, today's announcement by Dominion demonstrates continued momentum for the expansion of safe, emissions-free nuclear energy to power a secure and affordable energy future," said Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy Dennis Spurgeon after Dominion's announcement.

Just a week before Dominion's Nov. 27 filing, the NRC authorized an early site permit for a new reactor at North Anna, signaling the resolution of many site-related safety and environmental issues. This is the third such permit the NRC has issued.

The early site permit is valid for 20 years, but the NRC must approve Dominion's COL application before the company may begin any significant

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Americans Back Incentives for Carbon-Free Energy

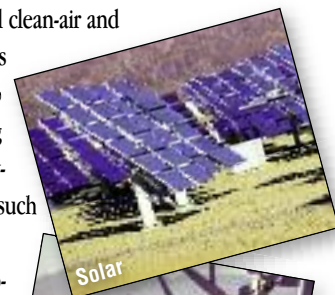
Public support for building new nuclear reactors continues to grow, along with support for federal financial incentives to help jump-start their construction, according to a new national survey of 1,000 adults.

Nearly eight in 10 Americans believe "it is appropriate for the federal government to provide some financial assistance to jump-start nuclear, solar, wind and other carbon-free energy technologies in order to meet national clean-air and carbon reduction goals and reduce the cost to consumers of building the facilities." Seventy-nine percent support such investment incentives; 18 percent do not support them.

The telephone survey was conducted Oct. 19-22 by Bisconti Research Inc. with GfK and has a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

A large percentage of Americans rank the threat of climate change and air pollution as top energy-related concerns, the survey

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Domenici Announces Retirement From U.S. Senate

New Mexico Sen. Pete Domenici, ranking Republican on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, will retire from the U.S. Senate after completing his current term in January 2009.

Domenici said health concerns led to his decision not to seek re-election to a seventh six-year term. He

has been diagnosed with the degenerative brain disease frontotemporal lobar degeneration, which he described as “progressive and incurable.”

Domenici was elected to the Senate in 1972 and is the longest-serving senator in New Mexico history. He became chairman of the

NEI's Skip Bowman with Sen. Pete Domenici at a tribute to the senator in October.

Energy and Natural Resources Committee in 2002 and now serves as its ranking Republican.

Domenici has been a leader in the development of energy policy in the Senate.

“I am proud of the bipartisan accomplishments that I've worked on that are leading to a renaissance of U.S. nuclear energy, that have made real progress in reducing nuclear weapons proliferation and that have implemented fundamental changes in energy policy,” Domenici said.

Domenici played a major role in establishing the U.S. Department of Energy's loan guarantee program. With the Nuclear Power 2010 program, he helped restore research and development funding for nuclear energy after it had been eliminated.



PHOTO BY ANNA GOMEZ/NEI



PHOTO BY ANNA GOMEZ/NEI

NuStart Energy President Marilyn Kray announces the filing of a license application for two reactors at the Tennessee Valley Authority's Bellefonte site in Alabama.

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construction. If it receives NRC approval—expected to take about four years—Dominion said a new plant could begin operating in 2015.

As the first COL applications for the ESBWR and AP1000 reactor designs, the Dominion and NuStart filings will serve as the reference documents for all future applications based on the same designs, which will help streamline NRC review of all ESBWR and AP1000 licenses. Three other U.S. energy companies plan to build ESBWRs, while four other companies are considering the AP1000.

The industry's goal is to develop a new generation of nuclear plants in “families” of federally approved designs. Standardizing reactor designs—an approach applied successfully in France—can reduce construction costs and lead to greater efficiencies in licensing and plant operation, including safety, maintenance, training and spare-parts procurement.

The industry and the NRC have been working toward standardization since the agency issued new guidelines for reactor licensing 18 years ago. The NRC rules provide for safety certification of nuclear plant designs and the COL review process.

The industry's standardized application approach will enhance the efficiency of regulatory reviews. Instead of reviewing applications for markedly different designs among multiple applicants, the NRC will be able to focus its resources on a single design used by all those applicants.

“Submittal of this application is the next key

step in the process,” said Bill McCollum, chief



BILL MCCOLLUM

operating officer at TVA. “The NRC's thorough and comprehensive review will help build certainty into the regulatory schedule for this and future applications.”

Both Dominion and NuStart will share the costs associated with COL applications with the U.S. Department of Energy through the agency's Nuclear Power 2010 program.

“[The] Nuclear Power 2010 initiative has paved the way for the industry to work together as never before to develop technical, regulatory and other opportunities that can renew nuclear energy in the United States,” said NuStart President Marilyn Kray.

The COL filings garnered praise from state and federal legislators.

“Nuclear power is our best source of clean, safe and reliable energy, and it can be produced here at home without any further reliance on foreign sources of energy,” said Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.). “Increasing our ability to generate nuclear power is a critical step to providing the [Tennessee] Valley with the affordable baseload power that its growing economy will require.”

“It is clear that momentum for nuclear energy in America is continuing to grow,” said Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.). After 30 years with no action, we have now seen three applications to build new plants in the last three months, with even more possible in the near future.”

DOE Issues Loan-Guarantee Rule for Clean-Energy Projects

The U.S. Department of Energy has issued a final rule that will allow the secretary of energy to grant loan guarantees for up to 80 percent of the cost of qualifying clean-energy projects, providing a vital form of investment support that will help companies obtain financing.

Companies seeking loan guarantees will pay the government the cost of providing that investment support. DOE will not use taxpayer funds to pay for any of the costs of the loan guarantees, the agency said.

Any company or project sponsor that obtains a loan guarantee must compensate the federal government for the long-term liability it assumes in granting the guarantee. That amount will vary by project, but will equal the current value of funds DOE would be required to disburse in the event of a project default.

In 2005, Congress authorized the energy secretary to issue loan guarantees for all of a qualifying energy project's debt, provided that debt does not exceed 80 percent of the project's total cost. To qualify, projects must use "innovative technologies" that avoid, reduce or sequester greenhouse gas emissions, including new nuclear power plants.



Loan guarantees would provide investment support for companies that build new nuclear plants.

"We are pleased that the final regulations provide for 100 percent guarantee of project debt, up to 80 percent of total project cost, as the Energy Policy Act intended," said Skip Bowman, president and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Nuclear energy provides clean-air benefits and forward price stability for consumers in a volatile

energy marketplace, Bowman noted. "These benefits accrue broadly to consumers and the U.S. economy, but electric companies carry a disproportionate share of the business risk in new-reactor projects. The federal government's loan guarantees appropriately would mitigate some of the business risk involved in building new nuclear plants."

Public Support from page 1

found. Asked to choose which of four issues seems "most important," 39 percent of Americans named global warming as their top concern and 22 percent chose air pollution. Twenty-one percent ranked economic growth first, while 16 percent selected energy security.

"Given the priority status that Americans affix to air-quality concerns, it's not surprising that they voice such high levels of support for government assistance for carbon-free energy technologies," said Ann Bisconti, president of Bisconti Research.

Americans strongly support specific mechanisms that Congress has approved to help stimulate construction of new electric-generating facilities. The survey showed that 78 percent of Americans approve of government tax credits as an incentive for companies to build solar, wind and advanced-design nuclear power plants.

Only 20 percent disapprove.

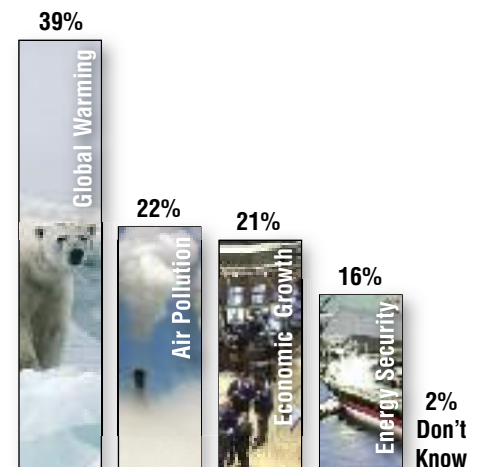
Similarly, 76 percent of Americans approve of federal loan guarantees "to jump-start investment in these critical energy facilities" that reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions. Twenty percent disapprove.

The survey found that public support for building new nuclear power plants remains strong. Seventy-five percent of Americans agree that electric companies should prepare now so that new nuclear plants could be built if needed within the next decade. Sixty-two percent of Americans agree that "we should definitely build more nuclear power plants"—an increase from 56 percent in a survey conducted last April.

In the new survey, 59 percent said that, if a new plant were needed to supply electricity, it would be acceptable to add a new reactor at the site of the nearest nuclear plant already operating.

U.S. Public Opinion, Oct. 2007

Which of these seems most important to you?



SOURCE: BISCONTI RESEARCH INC. WITH GFK

The Case for Nuclear Energy



*By Christine Todd Whitman
Co-Chair, Clean and Safe Energy Coalition*

Last year, the organizers of the Clean and Safe Energy (CASEnergy) Coalition asked me if I would like to co-chair a coalition with Dr. Patrick Moore, co-founder of Greenpeace and a well-known environmental activist. Our mission would be to convert 30 years of emotional debate about nuclear energy into a practical discussion of the role it can play in meeting our electricity demand.

For me, the discussion starts with the fact that nuclear energy doesn't emit any greenhouse gases. Scientists may debate some of their predictions about climate change, but they agree that greenhouse gas emissions are dangerously warming the planet. Addressing the problem will mean drastically reducing the levels of greenhouse gases we emit. But how?

From my time as governor of New Jersey and as U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator, I have found that a common-sense, realistic approach to problems is generally the best approach. We know that energy needs are sharply rising, and that fossil fuel-fired power plants will remain in the mix. We can and will continue to invest in technologies to make that energy cleaner, but we also should recognize that increasing nuclear energy is one way we can meet our base-load power needs without harming air quality.

For many environmentalists, the first instinct to meet this rising demand for energy is to look at renewable energy alternatives. We should welcome and encourage the development of solar, wind and other renewable power sources and encourage energy efficiency and conservation programs, but the reality is that renewables contribute only about 2.5 percent of our current power supply (absent hydroelectric power, which is largely built to full capacity in this country). Even if we double or triple our electricity supply from renewables by 2030, we still will need to increase our primary sources of electricity.

The CASEnergy Coalition has a membership of more than 1,400 organizations and opinion leaders from around the country. Coalition members have been discussing the important role of nuclear energy with environmental, health and policy groups, as well as many of the 2008 presi-

dential candidates. We're seeing more and more of these leaders recognize the need for an expanded role for nuclear power.

That's because nuclear energy is safe, it's among the most cost-effective sources of electricity production and it produces nearly three-quarters of all electricity that does not emit greenhouse gases. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recommended the use of nuclear energy as one of the measures that could reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

In many of the presidential debates and in candidate forums in Iowa, New Hampshire and other states, the candidates have been asked about their positions on nuclear energy. Their responses represent the growing number of Americans who are looking at nuclear energy as a viable, reliable and safe source to meet our rising electricity demand.

We are facing a serious energy and environmental challenge. The challenge going forward is for us to find a way to meet our energy needs while limiting repercussions on the environment.

Nuclear energy alone won't generate all of the power we need—40 percent more electricity by 2030, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. But we can't meet our rising need for energy and protect our environment without increasing our reliance on nuclear energy.

To join the CASEnergy Coalition, visit www.CleanSafeEnergy.org.

Democratic Presidential Candidates on Nuclear Energy



HILLARY CLINTON

"When it comes to nuclear power, I'm an agnostic. We've got

two big problems: What to do with waste? And how do we afford to build and maintain nuclear plants? If we can deal with those two big question marks, I'm not against it."



JOHN EDWARDS

"Wind, solar, cellulose-based bio-fuels are the way we need to go. I do

not favor nuclear power. ... It is extremely costly ... and we still don't have a safe way to dispose of the nuclear waste."



BARACK OBAMA

"Nuclear power is one of the few emissions-free energy sources

available to us. ... I am open to the use of nuclear power production as a transition to new energy technologies, but I think answers to a variety of safety questions, such as how we are going to transport and dispose of nuclear waste safely, are required."



BILL RICHARDSON

"The future in nuclear power is one that has to be on the table. ...

Because nuclear power emits hardly any greenhouse emissions, and because its technology is improved, you have to look at it as an option."

Nuclear 'Vital' in Addressing Climate Change, Industry Says

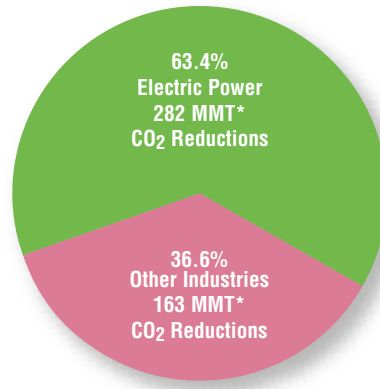
Nuclear energy should be an indispensable part of any credible program to reduce emissions, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) said in a policy position released in October.

With climate change emerging as a leading policy imperative at the state and federal levels, the nuclear energy industry supports federal action or legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy paper calls nuclear energy "a vital source of electricity that can meet the nation's growing energy needs with a secure, domestic energy supply that also protects our air quality."

"Nuclear power is the only proven technology deployed or deployable on a large scale to provide baseload electricity without producing greenhouse gases, and we are committed to meeting America's dramatically increasing energy needs while preserving clean air," said NEI President and Chief Executive Officer Skip Bowman.

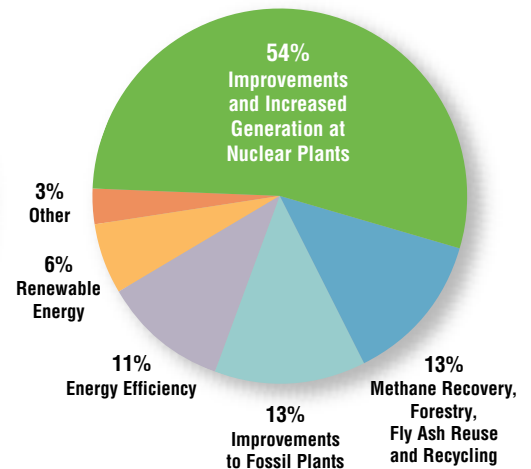
Nuclear power plants operating in 31 states provide more than 70 percent of all U.S. electricity that comes from sources that do not emit greenhouse gases or controlled pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act, such as nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide. Using more nuclear energy gives states additional flexibility in complying with clean-air requirements, NEI noted.

Electric Power Sector's Contribution to Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Program



*Million metric tons

Electric Power Greenhouse Gas Reductions by Project Type



SOURCE: ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION VOLUNTARY REPORTING OF GREENHOUSE GASES PROGRAM, ANNUAL REPORT 2004, THE LATEST YEAR FOR WHICH DATA IS AVAILABLE.

Increased electricity production from nuclear plants also accounts for the largest share of reported voluntary reductions in greenhouse gas emissions under the U.S. Department of Energy's voluntary Climate Challenge and Climate Vision program. Nuclear power plants provide 54 percent of the greenhouse gas reductions reported in the electric

sector and more than one-third of the reductions from across the entire economy.

"If we are going to be environmentally responsible and produce the electricity required to drive modern economic growth, nuclear power must be an indispensable part of the future energy portfolio of our country and the world," Bowman said.

Republican Presidential Candidates on Nuclear Energy



RUDY GIULIANI

"We're going to have to find a way to expand nuclear

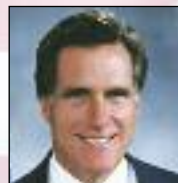
power, because it's one of the ways in which we can give ourselves [energy] independence and also not have it impact on the environment, on pollution, global warming—the things that concern people."



JOHN McCAIN

"The fact is, nuclear energy is clean. It produces zero emis-

sions in operations. It has the lowest carbon footprint and is, therefore, undeniably a valuable tool for reining in greenhouse gas emissions both quickly and economically."



MITT ROMNEY

"We're using too much oil. We have an answer. We can use

alternative sources of energy—biodiesel, ethanol, nuclear power—and we can drill for more oil here. We can be more energy independent and we can be far more efficient in the use of that energy."



FRED THOMPSON

"I am committed to investing in renewable and alternative fuels

to promote greater energy independence and a cleaner environment, [and] an energy policy that invests in the advanced technologies of tomorrow and places more emphasis on conservation and energy efficiency."

New-Reactor Construction Rule Maximizes Safety

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has taken steps that could make new-reactor construction processes more efficient while sharpening the agency's focus on safety.

The change alters how a company obtains regulatory approval for certain preparatory activities on a plant site before construction begins. The result? A greater regulatory emphasis on issues of nuclear plant safety and environmental significance.

At the heart of the revision to the NRC regulations is the agency's definition of "construction." The Atomic Energy Act requires federal approval before nuclear plant construction begins, but it does not define the term. NRC regulations long have defined the term broadly, encompassing a significant amount of work that has no reasonable link to nuclear safety. Such activities include site exploration and preparation, excavation, building fences, and constructing support and service facilities.

The revised definition of "construction" excludes these activities, allowing companies to proceed once they obtain the necessary permits from state and local authorities. Companies also



PHOTO COURTESY OF NRC

An NRC representative answers questions about potential new-reactor construction at the South Texas Project. The agency is holding public meetings near all proposed new-plant sites.

may procure equipment and portions of the plant that are to be constructed off site. However, if the NRC does not approve the company's environmental or safety applications, the company must restore the site to its original condition or seek state and local approval for alternate electricity generating capacity such as a natural gas-fired plant.

A more safety-focused licensing process should make nuclear plant construction more efficient. Modern construction methods focus on modularization, which requires building numerous fabrication facilities and assembling construction equipment on site before starting safety-related work. The industry estimates that preparatory activities could take as long as two years. The

revised regulations give companies the option of beginning that work in parallel with the review of their license applications.

In revising its regulations, the NRC retained provisions that allow a company to request a limited work authorization to begin specific safety-related construction activities—such as installing the foundation for certain parts of the plant—before the NRC issues a license. Such approval is contingent on the NRC's issuing an environmental impact statement for the site and the outcome of a public hearing focused on the activities described in the company's application for a limited work authorization.

Energy Department Keeps Yucca Mountain Application on Track

The U.S. Department of Energy in October completed two important tasks necessary for submitting a license application to build a disposal facility for used nuclear fuel at Yucca Mountain, Nev.

The agency certified an online document management system that will be used during the licensing process and issued environmental impact statements for the project—key milestones for DOE in advance of submitting a license application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission by June 2008.

DOE certified that its massive database of documents, which all parties will use in the facility's

licensing process, complies with NRC regulations. The NRC requires DOE to make documents related to the repository available to the public six months before submitting its application. The NRC will use the database, called the Licensing Support Network, in reviewing the Yucca Mountain application.

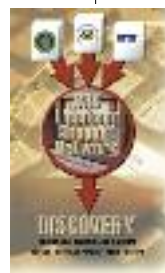
The agency also released for public comment two draft documents on the environmental impact of the repository. One takes into account design and operational developments since DOE issued the final environmental impact statement for the facility in 2002. The other addresses rail transportation of

used reactor fuel to Yucca Mountain using several different Nevada routes and responds to public comment from 2002. This document updates

DOE's previous analysis of Nevada rail corridors and examines the environmental impacts of specific rail alignments.

In the document, DOE selected a rail route through Caliente, Nev., as its preferred alternative and defined the specific alignment of the railroad along this route. Though reactor fuel likely will

be transported by dedicated trains, DOE recommended sharing this rail line with commercial shippers for general freight.



Nuclear Renaissance Presents Job Opportunities in All Sectors

The nuclear renaissance is real. But given its projected demands on America's work force, lawmakers on Capitol Hill are seriously weighing the question, "Will qualified workers be there when the country needs them?"

A group of bipartisan senators met in November with leaders from the nuclear energy industry, labor unions, government agencies and university engineering departments to explore employment opportunities the nuclear sector's expansion will create in the construction, manufacturing and utility industries.

"There is great opportunity here. Great opportunity to do good things for our air, to reduce our reliance on foreign oil ... and to create employment opportunities," said Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), who convened the roundtable discussion, along with Sen. George Voinovich (R-Ohio).

Thirty-five percent of the nuclear energy work force—about 19,600 workers—will be eligible for retirement within five years, Skip Bowman, Nuclear Energy Institute president and chief executive officer, told the senators.

Meanwhile, each reactor that companies are preparing to build will require 1,400 to 1,800 construction workers and 400 to 500 permanent workers.

"We know from past experience that construction of new nuclear power plants will provide thousands of jobs for American workers and provide a boost for the local economies," said John Sweeney, AFL-CIO president.

"We also know ... that a well-trained work force is essential to ensuring safe and efficient construction of nuclear facilities."

He pointed to "outstanding" training programs several unions use for trades and skills associated with building new plants, but the roundtable participants concurred that training is effective only when workers can begin work immediately after completing the programs. Because of the lengthy planning period required to build a nuclear plant, timing can be a challenge.



JOHN SWEENEY



PHOTO BY ANNA GOMEZ/NEI

"There's going to be plenty of jobs from figuring out how to build this new generation of new plants," Sen. Tom Carper said Nov. 7.

Among the qualified people who can join the well-trained work force are early retirees—those skilled workers who retired around age 55 and now are seeking part-time employment. The nuclear industry is ideally suited to these people because refueling outages at plants require temporary skilled workers, said Tom Christopher, president and chief executive officer of AREVA, which has an employee program focused on 55- to 70-year-olds. The skill base of this group is "remarkable," and their work ethic "really motivates the other generations," he said.

AREVA also focuses recruitment efforts on college graduates and high school students. Christopher said this age set seeks job flexibility, so offering career alternatives to new hires is critical to successful recruitment.

Increasing technical and vocational education at the high school level could be another successful strategy, said Bernie Beasley, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Southern Nuclear Operating Co. Beasley and others noted the strong emphasis in classrooms and homes on four-year degree programs, which many nuclear industry jobs do not require.

For those students who do pursue higher edu-

cation, many companies have partnered with community colleges near nuclear plants, as well as with larger universities, to place greater emphasis on nuclear technology and engineering programs. The results are self-evident: undergraduate enrollment in nuclear energy programs has increased nearly fourfold in the past eight years, while graduate-level enrollment has increased fivefold.

"I think this says it all. People can read the tea leaves, and they recognize the responsible thing to do for our country," Bowman said.

However, work remains in the recruitment area. "We have to be better salesmen about this being a profession where there are very skilled, well-paying jobs," said Don Hintz, president of the American Nuclear Society.

Audeen Fentimen, associate dean of engineering and a professor of nuclear engineering at Purdue University, agreed.

"Nuclear energy has a lot of characteristics that make it attractive to young people and to women. It's environmentally friendly, safe, it's reliable. Who wouldn't want to work in a place like that? But the average person doesn't know that nuclear power has those characteristics," Fentimen said.

Author Discovers 'The Truth About Nuclear Energy'

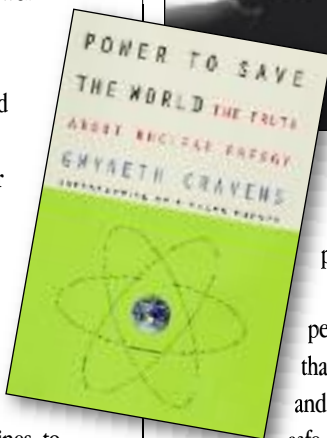
During the 1980s, science journalist and novelist Gwyneth Cravens was busy protesting the Shoreham nuclear power plant in Long Island, N.Y., where she lives.

The plant closed after only a short test run, but in subsequent years, Cravens' perception of nuclear energy has changed radically. She details this changed view in a new book, "Power to Save the World: The Truth About Nuclear Energy."

Cravens began to change her mind about nuclear energy when she met Dr. Richard "Rip" Anderson, a nuclear safety expert at Sandia National Laboratories in her hometown of Albuquerque, N.M. Wanting to learn more, Cravens spent several years traveling with Anderson to facilities at all stages of the nuclear energy fuel cycle, from uranium mills and mines, to nuclear plants, to the proposed used fuel disposal



PHOTO COURTESY OF RANDOM HOUSE



facility at Yucca Mountain, Nev. They also visited a coal-fired power plant.

"As I learned more, I became persuaded that the safety culture that prevails at U.S. nuclear plants and the laws of physics make them a safe and important tool for addressing global warming," Cravens says. "Clearly many

of my beliefs had originated in misinformation and fear-mongering."

Cravens brings readers along on her journey from anti-nuclear activist to nuclear energy advocate. She was especially persuaded by the vast difference in the size of the environmental footprints of coal and nuclear power plants.

"If you got all of your electricity for your lifetime solely from nuclear power, your share of the waste would fit in a single soda can," Cravens explains. "If you got all your electricity from coal, your share . . . would fit into six rail cars," not including 77 tons of carbon dioxide.

"When I began my research eight years ago, I'd assumed that we had many choices in the way we made electricity. But we don't," she says. "Nuclear power is the only large-scale, environmentally-benign, time-tested technology currently available to provide clean electricity."

For more information about "Power to Save the World," visit www.randomhouse.com/kenoff/.

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