Progress Energy

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Options for Baseload Generation

Is Progress Energy Florida building a new nuclear plant in Levy County?

Progress Energy Florida has not yet made a final decision on whether to build new nuclear units in Levy County.

In December 2006, the company selected a site in southern Levy County as the preferred location for potential nuclear expansion in Florida. The Levy County site is about 3,100 acres, located about seven miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico and eight miles north of the company's Crystal River Energy Complex in Citrus County.

The proposed site is going through detailed assessments, including environmental and weather studies. If the decision is made to move forward with building the two units, they could be online as early as 2016 to 2017.

What are the top options for new baseload plants?

Fuel diversity is important in ensuring a reliable, stable supply of electricity for customers. Progress Energy Florida has the most diverse fuel mix of any utility in the state, and is committed to a balanced mix of power generation alternatives, including natural gas, coal, oil, nuclear and renewable sources. This is the most prudent way to continue to ensure a safe, reliable and economical source of electricity. However, for baseload generation plants (those that must operate every hour of every day), the most practical and efficient alternatives that we are presented with today are natural gas and nuclear.

Why is the company considering nuclear power?

Nuclear power is a clean way to generate energy that does not produce greenhouse gas emissions, sulfur dioxide (SO2) or nitrogen oxides (NOx). With growing concerns about climate change, nuclear power is a sound environmental choice. Nuclear also protects customers from price volatility associated with oil and natural gas prices and ensures a reliable supply of electricity.

What about coal gasification technology?

Embracing new technology is something our customers expect from their electricity provider. Progress Energy Florida is evaluating numerous options for fulfilling baseload generation requirements in future years, including evolving technologies such as coal gasification. With any new technology, there are limitations on operational data for comparisons. There have been smaller projects, but no coal gasification plants of the size resource that our customer demand requires, a fact that can make thorough evaluations difficult. But the company is working to investigate the benefits and challenges posed by the technology and compare those with other options. The company's goal is to continue to provide the best balance of resources to ensure a stable, reliable, efficient and environmentally responsible supply of electricity for its customers.

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