



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-001

January 30, 2009

Ms. Katie Lewis
133 N. 1200 East
Orem, UT 84097

Dear Katie:

Thank you for your letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission regarding new nuclear power plants. I've enclosed several fact sheets for you on this topic.

The NRC staff expects it would take about three and a half years for the agency to complete its review of a request to build and operate a nuclear power plant. Two and a half years would go towards technical studies of the proposal, and the staff expects the associated legal review would require an additional 12 months. If the NRC issues a license to build and operate a plant, current public estimates for construction indicate it would take at least three years to complete construction. If the company builds the plant properly to NRC standards, the plant could begin operating within a year of construction.

U.S. commercial nuclear power plants are basically the same as those found in Western Europe. In fact, the NRC is currently reviewing a French design to see if it is acceptable for use here. The United Kingdom uses a few reactors with a distinctly different design, and most reactors in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are also very different from U.S. designs.

The NRC has one job – ensuring the public and the environment are protected when radioactive materials are used for civilian purposes. The agency neither supports nor opposes the use of nuclear power, we only ensure it is safe if a company decides to use it. It would be more appropriate for the Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy to discuss your desire to "further nuclear power in the United States." You can find information about the office on the Internet at www.nuclear.gov.

Thank you.

/ra/

Scott Burnell
Office of Public Affairs

Encl: Fact Sheets

Action Item 002
Due 2/4/09

Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

To Whom it May Concern:

I am very interested in nuclear power, and would like to learn more about it. How long does it take to build and begin operating a nuclear power plant? How are U.S. nuclear power plants different from those in Europe? What are the advantages of nuclear power? Any information you can send me would be greatly appreciated. I would also like to learn about what I can do to further nuclear power in the U.S. Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Katie Lewis

Katie Lewis
133 North 1200 East
Orem, UT 84097