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Nuclear Power: Safe, Inexpensive Energy

(NAPSA)—With oil prices becoming more volatile than the stock market and growing concerns over the finite availability of fossil fuels, the search for abundant, inexpensive energy sources continues to point in the direction of nuclear power.

All the more noteworthy about nuclear energy is that the reactors that generate it—though clearly advanced in terms of safety—have not changed all that much since the first one went operational in Shippingport, Pa., nearly 50 years ago.

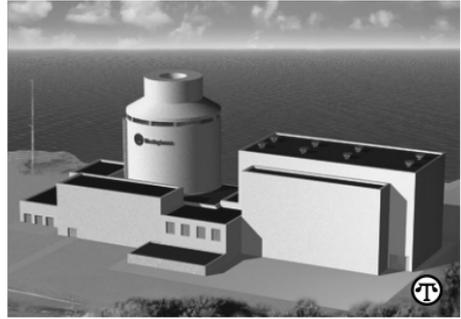
Next generation

The Westinghouse AP1000 standard plant design is the first Generation III+ reactor to receive Final Design Approval from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. It is the safest, most economical nuclear power plant available—yet is still based on the same Pressurized Water Reactor technology that has accumulated thousands of reactor-years of successful operation internationally since 1957.

“AP1000 contains significantly fewer pumps, piping, valves and cables, so there are fewer items to install, inspect and maintain than in a traditional plant,” says Jack Allen, senior vice president of nuclear power plants for Westinghouse.

From a safety perspective, Allen emphasizes that the plant relies on naturally occurring phenomena such as gravity, natural circulation and condensation, guaranteeing a safe shutdown of the plant even in the highly unlikely event of an accident.

“Additionally,” he says, “the



Today's nuclear power plants take both safety and economy into account.

plant will be constructed modularly, which will greatly improve construction quality while reducing construction time to about 36 months. This shortened construction period greatly reduces the amount of time investment capital will be tied up before the plant actually begins to generate electricity.”

According to Westinghouse, the projected cost for the AP1000 will be between \$1,000 and \$1,200 per kilowatt after the first plants have been built, making the plant cost competitive with both coal and gas-fired plants, at today's fuel costs. Longer term, it is likely to become a preferred producer of baseload electricity—given that uranium costs are more stable and predictable than for fossil fuels.

“Besides the obvious benefits to safety, the simplification of the plant through passive safety features will make AP1000 substantially less expensive to construct and operate,” adds Allen.

To learn more about nuclear energy and the AP1000 plant, visit the Web site at www.ap1000.westinghousenuclear.com.