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March 20, 2020

The Honorable Dan Brouillette
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

Support Needed to Maintain a Reliable Electricity Grid During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Mr. Secretary,

Thank you very much for speaking at the Nuclear Energy Institute's recent Executive Committee meeting. The U.S. nuclear energy industry is committed to working with the Administration to provide clean, reliable and affordable electricity as the nation addresses the COVID-19 pandemic.

As follow-up to our discussion, we want to work with you, the Administration and state governors to ensure nuclear workers and the suppliers and vendors that we rely on to meet electricity demands are allowed unimpeded access to the plants.

Background on Nuclear Continuity Requirements

As you know, nuclear energy plants have been designated by the Department of Homeland Security as critical infrastructure, because continued operation of the power grid is vital to pandemic response. Our industry has multi-stage plans to continue operations during a pandemic, and our plants have implemented these to the degree required by local conditions. To date, all operating plants are continuing to run reliably, and refueling operations already underway are moving forward on schedule.

However, we want to bring to your attention the unique requirement with respect to nuclear reactors and the need to load a fresh batch of fuel once every 18 or 24 months. The reactors typically shut down for two to four weeks of intense work, including maintenance that can only be performed while the reactor is not operating. These "refueling outages" are typically scheduled in the Spring and Fall when electricity demand is lowest. Each plant typically brings in several hundred specialized workers for this work over a typical period of 30-60 days, which includes activities in advance of and following the outage. These workers typically stay in hotels or board with local families, and eat in restaurants.

In the course of performing these outages, and in routine operations, nuclear power plants utilize personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies for radiological protection. During the pandemic, these supplies are supplemented by medical PPE and supplies needed to protect workers and minimize the potential for spread. Attachment 1 is the list of necessary PPE and supplies that are expected to be in short supply during this pandemic.

This Spring, 32 nuclear power stations in 21 states are planning to undergo refueling outages, which are essential to maintaining reliable and clean power generation. We note that plants can also have unplanned safe shutdowns with similar challenges during a pandemic. Attachment 2 provides the reactor name, location, and timeframe for the planned refueling outages in 2020.

Across the nuclear fleet, precautions are being taken to limit the risks of COVID-19 during these intense work periods, including:

- Directing employees who don't feel well to stay home, encouraging them to seek medical attention, and asking for a report on their condition;
- Excluding personnel who have recently been in countries impacted by the virus;
- Screening of employees, contractors, and any necessary visitors at the plant gate and, at some plants, taking their temperature;
- Disinfecting surfaces more often;
- Closing or limiting access to cafeterias and other places employees congregate; and
- Increasing the number of handwashing facilities.

Urgent Support Needed to Ensure Continuity of Reactor Performance

To help in addressing potential challenges to maintaining a reliable electric grid during the COVID-19 pandemic and particularly during current and near-term refueling outages here and abroad, we have identified specific actions that would be of immediate benefit in helping the people and the companies of our nation's nuclear energy sector to withstand the ongoing operational and economic disruption:

- Ensure that the Federal designation of essential workers includes workers supporting nuclear operations and refueling outages;
- Allow travel to the plants for the performance of these essential activities;
- Maintain hotel and food services to support these essential activities;
- Permit unfettered access to travel across state lines and in communities in order to reach plant sites, lodging, and food services;
- Provide priority for PPE, in particular, surgeons' gloves, sanitized wipes, dust masks, and disposable thermometers;
- Provide priority for COVID-19 testing kits and necessary radiological and medical protective equipment and supplies for nuclear workers; and

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- Permit international workers who perform highly specialized functions to travel into the U.S. and establish protocols immediately to enable their safe entry.

We urge your support for these actions, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure our nation's energy needs are met safely, reliably and affordably – today, tomorrow, and for the long-term.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Korsnick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maria Korsnick

Attachments

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) With Constrained Supply

- Surgeons Gloves (various sizes)
- Single-Use Sanitized Wipes
- Dust Masks
- Disposable Thermometers

Expected U.S. Nuclear Plant Refueling Outages in 2020

	Plant	City	State	Company	Approx. Start
1	Browns Ferry	Athens	AL	Tennessee Valley Authority	Mid February
2	Grand Gulf	Port Gibson	MS	Entergy	Mid February
3	Brunswick	Southport	NC	Duke Energy Progress	late February
4	Davis Besse	Oak Harbor	OH	First Energy	Late February
5	Byron	Byron	IL	Exelon	Early March
6	Nine Mile	Oswego	NY	Exelon	Early March
7	Vogtle	Augusta	GA	Southern Nuclear Operating Co.	Early March
8	South Texas Project	Wadsworth	TX	STP Nuclear Operating Co.	Early March
9	Arkansas Nuclear One	Russellville	AR	Entergy	Early March
10	Point Beach	Two Rivers	WI	NextEra (FPL)	Early March
11	Salem	Hancocks Bridge	NJ	PSEG	Early March
12	Fermi	Frenchtown Charter Twp.	MI	DTE Energy	Mid March
13	McGuire	Huntersville	NC	Duke Energy	Mid March
14	Susquehanna	Berwick	PA	Talen Energy	Mid March
15	Sequoyah	Soddy Daisy	TN	Tennessee Valley Authority	Late March
16	Beaver Valley	Shippingport	PA	FirstEnergy	Late March
17	Limerick	Pottstown	PA	Exelon	Late March
18	Quad Cities	Cordova	IL	Exelon	Late March
19	Turkey Point	Florida City	FL	Florida Power & Light	Late March
20	Seabrook	Seabrook	NH	NextEra Energy	Early April
21	Salem	Hancocks Bridge	NJ	PSEG	Early April
22	Palo Verde	Tonopah	AZ	Arizona Public Service Company	Early April
23	Comanche Peak	Glen Rose	TX	Luminant	Early April
24	Ginna	Ontario	NY	Exelon	Early April
25	Oconee	Seneca	SC	Duke Energy	Early April
26	VC Summer	Jenkinsville	SC	Dominion Energy	Early April
27	Millstone	Waterford	CT	Dominion Energy	Early April
28	Braidwood	Braceville	IL	Exelon	Mid April
29	Watts Bar	Spring City	TN	Tennessee Valley Authority	Mid April
30	Catawba	York	SC	Duke Energy	Early May
31	Surry	Surry	VA	Dominion Energy	Early May
32	Indian Point	Buchanan	NY	Entergy	Early May
33	Palisades	Covert	MI	Entergy	Late August
34	North Anna	Mineral	VA	Dominion Energy	Early September
35	Robinson	Hartsville	SC	Duke Energy Progress	Early September
36	Vogtle	Augusta	GA	Southern Nuclear Operating Co.	Early September
37	Fitzpatrick	Oswego	NY	Exelon	Early September
38	Prairie Island	Welch	MN	Northern States Power	Early September
39	DC Cook	Bridgman	MI	AEP	Mid September
40	McGuire	Huntersville	NC	Duke Energy	Mid September
41	Cooper	Brownville	NE	Nebraska Public Power District	Mid September
42	Waterford	Killona	LA	Entergy	Mid September
43	Point Beach	Two Rivers	WI	NextEra (FPL)	Early October
44	Salem	Hancocks Bridge	NJ	PSEG	Early October
45	Palo Verde	Tonopah	AZ	Arizona Public Service Company	Early October
46	Browns Ferry	Athens	AL	Tennessee Valley Authority	Early October
47	Diablo Canyon	Avila Beach	CA	Pacific Gas & Electric	Early October
48	Callaway	Fulton	MO	Ameren	Early October
49	Byron	Byron	IL	Exelon	Early October
50	Turkey Point	Florida City	FL	Florida Power & Light	Early October
51	Farley	Dothan	AL	Southern Nuclear Operating Co.	Early October
52	Comanche Peak	Glen Rose	TX	Luminant	Early October
53	Peach Bottom	Delta	PA	Exelon	Mid October
54	Millstone	Waterford	CT	Dominion Energy	Mid October
55	Watts Bar	Spring City	TN	Tennessee Valley Authority	Mid October
56	Duane Arnold	Palo	IA	NextEra Energy	Late October