

## New National Energy Policy has Several Key Nuclear Provisions

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, signed into law by President Bush this summer, includes incentives for nuclear energy research and new nuclear plant construction. It also modernizes the tax treatment of the trust funds set aside for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants.

“Nuclear energy is becoming increasingly important to our nation’s economic stability because it is inexpensive, readily available and does not create harmful emissions,” said Britt McKinney, senior vice president and chief nuclear officer of PPL Generation. “It also decreases our dependence on expensive foreign oil.

“While PPL has no specific plans to build new generating plants, we consider nuclear to be a viable option for future expansion.

“PPL plans to make equipment and fuel modifications to the plant’s two reactors that will increase output by about 6 percent. We already have installed new turbines and upgraded other components that have increased capacity by nearly 10 percent since the units first began operating in the 1980s. Next year, we plan to apply to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to renew our license for an additional 20 years beyond our original 40-year license,” Britt said.

## Nuclear Power Plays Key Role in Nation’s Energy Supply

- Nuclear power provides nearly 20 percent of the nation’s and 36 percent of Pennsylvania’s energy needs.
- According to the U.S. Department of Energy, utilities will need to develop 281,000 megawatts of new generating capacity by 2025 as demand rises and older coal- and oil-fired plants are closed.

## New Emergency Sirens Ensure Public Safety

PPL is committed to protecting the health and safety of its neighbors living near the Susquehanna nuclear power plant. As part of that commitment, the company is replacing the emergency sirens located within a 10-mile radius of the plant.

“These sirens provide our communities with a vital alert system that can be used for any type of emergency, not just for nuclear emergencies,” said Diane Coffin, supervisor of PPL Susquehanna’s emergency planning group. “In fact, local fire companies use 16 of the sirens

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The new sirens (left) will rotate on their poles to ensure full coverage. The old sirens (right) will be removed after the new system is installed.

## Siren tests

We perform monthly silent tests on the sirens and sound them briefly every quarter. The entire system is activated for several minutes once a year. Upcoming regional sound tests:

### **Bloomsburg area:**

The week of Nov. 7.

### **Hazleton area:**

The weeks of Sept. 12 and Dec. 5.

### **Wilkes-Barre area:**

The week of Oct. 10.

# Operating Safely Is Susquehanna's First Priority

After a long continuous run and successful outage, Unit 2 shut down three times this spring because of equipment failures.

“We did not encounter any complications when shutting down because our operators’ performance was good and our safety systems and procedures worked exactly as intended,” said Bob Saccone, vice president-Nuclear Operations.

“Although we are always fully supported by the corporation to shut down to ensure the safety of our employees and the public, every forced outage affects the company. Our thorough evaluations confirmed the equipment failures were unrelated to the refueling outage. The type of equipment that failed is not normally inspected during every outage.”

Operators shut Unit 2 down in mid-April to make electrical repairs to the unit’s battery chargers. They shut it down again later that month when a fan that helps cool one of the unit’s main transformers malfunctioned. The third shutdown in early June was due to a failed voltage regulator.

The evaluations also revealed no common causes between events. Employees inspected similar equipment and did not find any related problems.

“We are committed to identifying equipment issues before they affect the operation of the plant. We continually strive to improve our performance while remaining well-prepared for challenges,” Bob said.



OSHA representatives Marie Cassidy (second from left) and Andrew Hedesh (right) present Susquehanna's VPP team with a flag recognizing the plant's safety program.

## Employees Committed to Working Safely

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration recertified PPL Susquehanna this summer as a “Star” site in the Voluntary Protection Program.

OSHA sponsors VPP to recognize companies that have first-class safety programs. According to OSHA, job-related injury rates for VPP Star worksites are at least 50 percent lower than the average for their industries.

“Because we must continually improve our program as well as meet or exceed OSHA’s safety requirements, being recertified is as difficult as the initial certification,” said Britt McKinney, senior

vice president and chief nuclear officer of PPL Generation. “This achievement resulted from the active involvement and commitment of all our employees.”

OSHA determines a site’s status based on a thorough review of the plant’s safety statistics, employee interviews and an on-site review of safety procedures, equipment and actual practices.

OSHA re-inspects VPP plants every three years; it granted Susquehanna’s initial Star status in 2002.

Many of PPL’s generating plants also have achieved VPP Star status.

During its review, OSHA recognized the strengths of Susquehanna’s safety program:

- Using videos of radiation areas to plan work without being exposed to radiation.
- The ability to quickly rescue people from confined spaces.
- Innovative electrical safety equipment.
- Employee training on reducing errors.

OSHA also recommended several fall-protection improvements.



Medical professionals team up with Susquehanna employees to practice providing prompt medical care to plant employees.



## Employees Help Local Health Professionals Practice Responding to Medical Emergencies

Lying securely tethered to a backboard, Susquehanna security officer Dale Rothrock felt himself pulled gently to the right and then to the left in the few minutes it took for Life Flight to fly him from the Susquehanna plant to the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pa.

Dale was one of two plant volunteers to act as an accident victim during a July drill coordinated between the plant and local hospitals. Dale was transported from the plant to Susquehanna's helipad by the Shickshinny Ambulance Association. The second volunteer, chemist Curt Smith, was taken by the Pond Hill/Lily Lake Ambulance Association to Berwick Hospital.

"Working with medical professionals allows us to fine-tune our ability to get prompt medical attention for injured workers while protecting the medical professionals who care for them," said Nevin Dressler, off-site emergency planner for PPL Susquehanna. "These annual drills are part of our regular coordination with community organizations and agencies."



## Emergency Sirens *(Continued from page 1)*

for fire alarms.

"When sounded in an emergency, the sirens alert you to tune into your local radio or television station for news about what to do. In fact, the sirens are just one part of an extensive plan we've developed alongside our local and county emergency management agencies to help keep you safe," Diane said.

The new sirens will rotate on their poles to ensure fuller coverage. They also are outfitted with a 10-day rechargeable backup battery, so they will work even during power outages. Additionally, the system that communicates with the sirens has a 10-day uninterruptible power supply.

"By the time you receive this

newsletter, about half of the new sirens will be installed. The entire system is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year," Diane said.

Once the new system is installed and tested, PPL will remove the old system. As was the case with the old system, PPL will test the new system regularly.

# New Security Training Equipment Provides Realism

Protecting the public by protecting Susquehanna requires vigilance and aggressive training for the plant's security officers.

"We are always evaluating potential threats and improving how we would respond to them," said Mike Sleigh, Susquehanna's security manager. "We recently upgraded some of our training equipment to make security drills more realistic."

All elements of Susquehanna's comprehensive security training come together in evening drills held regularly at the site. During the drills, some security officers act as mock adversaries that the drill players must defeat. This summer, Security officers began using blank ammunition, which sounds much like real gunfire, with their laser-activated rifles. They also began using non-lethal "distraction devices" that emit a bright flash of light and a loud noise.



Susquehanna security officer Joe Nicholas demonstrates tactical moves at the plant's firing range.

"We have upgraded the equipment we would use during an actual event and modified site structures to satisfy our obligation to protect the plant, our employees and the public," Mike said.

These recent improvements enhance the more than \$10 million in security improvements made at the site last year.

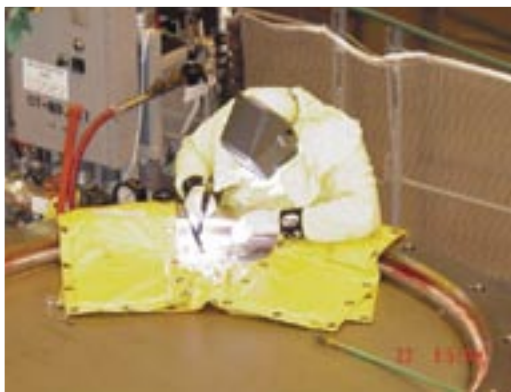
Susquehanna's security group works closely with the local state police, FBI and other law enforcement agencies. If you become concerned about unusual noises or activities around the site, call the state police.

# Transfer of 244 Spent Fuel Assemblies to Dry Storage Nears Completion

PPL employees have safely stored 244 spent fuel assemblies in four concrete casks in a dry storage area inside the plant's security fences.

"During the summer, we safely transferred spent fuel from cooling pools to dry casks so we have room for the used fuel to be removed from the reactor during the next outage," said Duane Karchner, Refueling Floor manager. "We are storing spent fuel in dry casks until the U.S. government opens a national repository at Yucca Mountain, Nev."

With 36 casks now filled, the storage pad has the capacity for 69 more canisters — enough to store used fuel until 2017.



A Susquehanna employee monitors the welding of one of the casks.

# NRC Officials Visit the Plant; Mid-Cycle Report States Plant Operated Safely

Two high-ranking Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials from Region 1 — Samuel Collins, Regional Administrator, and Brian Holian, Director of Reactor Projects — toured our plant on July 29.

During their visit, they acknowledged several improvements, including our ability to identify and resolve problems. They also shared their perspectives on industry issues related to security, emergency planning and grid reliability with plant management.

These improvements and a few issues of very low safety significance are noted in the commission's mid-year report. The report reflects the commission's perception, based on regular visits and daily inspections, that we operate the plant safely.

"The NRC appreciates our openness and willingness to work with them to improve processes and resolve issues," said Rocky Sgarro, manager-Nuclear Regulatory Affairs. "Based on the results of their inspections and their positive overall impression during visits, they have determined that they need to perform only the minimum required inspections through 2005."

Had the NRC found significant plant problems, the oversight agency could have increased the intensity or frequency of inspections.

The Susquehanna plant is located in the NRC's Region 1, which covers the Northeast and is headquartered near Philadelphia.

## PPL Susquehanna Powerwalkers donated more than \$7,000 for cancer research

Ten Susquehanna employees, called the PPL Powerwalkers, raised more than \$7,000 for the American Cancer Society for their Relay for Life walkathon held at the Berwick Area High School track in June.

“Many of us at the plant have a loved one or friend suffering from cancer,” said Tammy Acker, computer associate and the fundraiser’s lead organizer. “Cancer research has helped thousands cope with and overcome this frightening disease.”



Members of Susquehanna’s Powerwalkers team hold a bucket used to collect change at the plant’s entrance.

The Powerwalkers have raised more than \$28,000 for the Relay for Life campaign over the past four years.

## Giving Back

PPL employees donated more than 117 pints of blood during summer blood drives.



PPL Susquehanna employees donated school supplies for more than a dozen children at the Domestic Violence Service Center in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



PPL Susquehanna and its employees donated \$2,500 for the Berwick chapter of the American Red Cross to aid 12 families displaced by the fire at the Flatiron building in Berwick, Pa.



PPL Susquehanna employees donated toys and gifts for dozens of children at the Janet Weis Children’s Hospital in Danville, Pa. The donation was made in conjunction with the Geisinger Medical Center’s annual fundraiser for their children’s hospital.



*A message from Lou Ramos, Community Relations Manager for PPL Susquehanna.*

### Building a New Generation of Nuclear Plant Workers

The provisions of the nation’s new energy policy point toward the bright future of nuclear power. These bright prospects encourage us to continue to invest in our plant

to increase capacity and proceed with license renewal.

This financial investment requires a complementary investment in our workforce. Because nearly 50 percent of our workforce will retire over the next 10 years, we have plans in place to pass on our experience, knowledge and respect for nuclear safety to the next generation of nuclear plant workers.

Toward that end, we have been working with several local schools and universities to develop or enhance their programs. We are helping Luzerne County Community College establish an associate’s degree in nuclear engineering technology that will prepare local people for jobs

in operations, radiation protection and instrumentation. We also have evaluated the programs at other institutions, including Pennsylvania College of Technology, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University and the Columbia-Montour County Vocational Technical School, for positions in radiation protection, engineering and electrical maintenance.

Our collaboration means new hires will require less orientation training so we can continue to offer high-quality jobs to the many talented young adults right in our own communities.



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# Susquehanna Riverlands Environmental Preserve

PPL provides year-round education and recreation at the Susquehanna Riverlands. Upcoming programs on the environment, energy and other topics include:

**Tree-mendous Tree Trek, Oct.**

**16:** “Porcupine” Pat McKinney of the Schuylkill Conservation District will lead a search through field and forest for the many colors of the season.

**Recovery of America’s “Most Endangered” River, Oct. 22:** Learn about the fate of the Susquehanna River from Dr. Brian Mangan.

**Great Pumpkin 5K Run/Walk, Oct. 29:** Support the Berwick YMCA and enjoy a walk or run along the trails of the Susquehanna Riverlands at this race, sponsored by PPL’s Community of Volunteers and the Berwick

Marathon Association.

**Animal Skulls and What They Tell Us, Oct. 30:** Dr. James Montgomery will show you what you can learn about an animal from its skull.

For more information about Susquehanna Riverlands programs or to receive PPL’s Environmental Currents newsletter, call 1-570-542-2306 or visit our Web site at [www.pplweb.com/seic](http://www.pplweb.com/seic).

Some programs require advance registration and have limited space, so call early.

# We’re Listening

If you would like to know more about any of the subjects covered in this issue, or if you have questions or comments about the plant, please call us at the Susquehanna Special Office, 570-759-2281 or 570-542-2131.

Inside Susquehanna is published three times a year by PPL Susquehanna. For past issues, please visit our Web site at [www.pplweb.com/seic](http://www.pplweb.com/seic).