

TEPCO Submits Application for Installation of Higashidori-1 NPS

On September 29, Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) submitted an application to the head of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) for permission to install a reactor, for its Higashidori-1 NPS (ABWR, 1,385 MW). This was the first filing by any power utility since the application of Japan's revised seismic design examination guidelines related to nuclear facilities. (See the September 19 article "Revised Seismic Design Guidelines Come into Force on September 19.")

TEPCO's Higashidori-1 NPS (NOTE: not to be confused with the Tohoku Electric Power Co.'s Higashidori-1), in Higashidori Village, Aomori Prefecture, will be initiated in November 2008 (i.e., the approval of its construction plan). Its actual construction is set to be launched in December 2008 (the start of excavation of the foundation for the main building), and commercial operation is slated to commence in scheduled for December 2014. The specifications of the reactor will be the same as those for the Kashiwazaki Kariwa-6 and -7 NPSs (1,356 MW each), but the output of Higashidori-1 will be slightly higher as a result of improved thermal efficiency thanks to the temperature of the seawater used, the efficiency of the turbines, etc.

The government examined the application in light of the new examination guidelines and approved it based on the assumption that standard ground acceleration was 450gal and vertical acceleration 300gal. From now on, the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) and the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) will review the appropriateness of the process for determining ground acceleration and the results, along with the safety of the reactor and its various facilities.

TEPCO may begin preparatory work before the year is out, and will make efforts to conclude compensation negotiations with the local fishermen's cooperative association, which it has been pursuing together with Tohoku Electric Power.



Conceptual drawing of the TEPCO's Higashidori NPS

This was the first time that TEPCO had applied to install a reactor since 1988 – a 18-year hiatus – which is when it did so for Kashiwazaki Kariwa-6 and -7.

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