

Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy reactor technology selected for TXU Corp. power plant

This was originally Westinghouse technology.

Yahoo (Associated Press)
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Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. said Wednesday TXU Corp. of the United States has selected the Japanese company's nuclear reactor technology for a Texas power plant.

Mitsubishi Heavy will supply its US-APWR pressurized water reactor technology for use in multiple sites at the Texas-based company's nuclear power plant in the suburbs of Dallas, the Japanese manufacturer said in a statement. The technology to be supplied can generate up to 1,700 megawatt-hours of power, it said.

This marks the first time a Japanese company has received an order from abroad for such technology made in Japan, said MHI spokesman Kengo Tatsukawa.

Tatsukawa said the company could not disclose the amount of the deal because of confidentiality clause with the client.

The Nikkei business newspaper said the combined value is estimated at 600 billion yen (US\$5.17 billion; euro3.91 billion).

TXU, the largest power operator in Texas, formally notified the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission of its selection on Friday, the statement said. The U.S. power operator plans to start commercial operations at the plant with new reactors starting from 2015 to 2020, it said.

Tokyo-based Mitsubishi Heavy, Japan's largest heavy machinery maker, plans to formally apply to the NRC for design certification of the reactor technology by the end of this year.

The 1979 partial meltdown of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania led to a virtual halt in new plant construction in the United States. There are now about 100 nuclear plants in the U.S., producing about 20 percent of the country's electricity.

But fears of global warming and the rising cost of natural gas and coal may finally change the image of nuclear power.

In August 2005, President George W. Bush signed an energy bill that streamlines applications and offers loan incentives, tax credits and federal insurance for new plants. (Editor: *However these concessions are minor in thte financing of a new plant and have little to do with the decision to provide more nuclear capacity.*)

Mitsubishi estimates that "a few dozen" nuclear plants will be built in the U.S. by around 2030.