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New Jersey Weighs Building Another Nuclear Plant, First Since 1973

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRENTON (AP) — Gov. [Jon S. Corzine](#) said on Thursday that [New Jersey](#) was considering building a nuclear power plant, the first in the United States since 1973, as part of an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state.

The proposal, part of a 15-year energy master plan, does not specify a site, but a spokesman for Public Service Electric & Gas said the company was investigating the possibility of adding a fourth plant to its Lower Alloways Creek site in Salem County and expected to make a decision by the end of the year.

The plan calls for reviewing sites, permits, financing and waste disposal involved in bringing another nuclear plant to the state and for studying other technologies that would cause only minimal or no carbon dioxide emissions.

“A business-as-usual energy policy risks enormous economic and environmental consequences,” Mr. Corzine wrote in the plan. “In contrast, an energy policy that focuses on producing and using energy as wisely as possible greatly reduces these consequences and positions us to be a strong competitor in the global economy.”

The proposal would be the subject of public hearings, and the federal [Nuclear Regulatory Commission](#) would have final approval.

Last year Mr. Corzine signed legislation making New Jersey the third state to enact a comprehensive greenhouse gas reduction law. California and Hawaii have similar laws.

The legislation requires the state to reduce [global warming](#) gases to 1990 levels by 2020 and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 2006 levels by 2050.

In addition to considering another nuclear plant, Mr. Corzine said he wanted to generate 20 percent of the state’s electricity with renewable energy like wind and [solar power](#).

The master plan discusses ways to promote energy conservation, meet electricity demands, find methods to get electricity from renewable sources and invest in clean energy technologies and businesses.

Lisa Jackson, the state environmental protection commissioner, said, “Few initiatives will more significantly shape New Jersey’s environmental future and positively affect generations to come than the work we’re now doing to embrace and implement progressive clean-energy policies and programs.”

Environmental groups were sharply critical of Mr. Corzine's 15-year energy plan.

Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey chapter of the [Sierra Club](#), said the governor "needs to step up and lead New Jersey to a cleaner, greener future with more wind, solar and better energy efficiency goals."

Dave Pringle of the New Jersey Environmental Federation said, "The question is not coal versus nuclear to keep the lights on, but rather those antiquated, dangerous technologies versus cutting-edge clean renewable and efficient solutions."

As in most states, residents in New Jersey are struggling with rising fuel prices. The cost of electricity has also soared because the price of coal, gas and uranium is making power plants more expensive to operate.

Another nuclear plant in New Jersey, the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in Lacey Township, is waiting for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to grant a 20-year extension of its license.

About 100 nuclear power plants are in operation in the United States, but an order has not been placed for a new reactor since 1973, six years before an accident at the Three Mile Island plant in Pennsylvania intensified opposition to nuclear power.

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