



13-49

Contact NEI's media relations staff at media@nei.org, 202.739.8000 during business hours or 703.644.8805 after hours and weekends.

US Public Sees Vital Role For Nuclear Energy



NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

85% of Americans Say Importance of Nuclear Energy To Meet Power Needs Will Increase or Remain the Same

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 25, 2013—Public backing for nuclear energy's role in meeting future electricity needs remains strong, a new U.S. public opinion survey for the Nuclear Energy Institute shows.

The NEI-commissioned Bisconti Research poll shows that 82 percent of Americans believe that nuclear energy will play an important role in meeting the country's future electricity needs. Eighty-five percent think that nuclear energy's importance in meeting U.S. electricity needs will increase or remain the same, with half saying more reactors will be needed.

Bisconti Research Inc., with Quest Global Research, conducted the national survey of public opinion Sept. 5-15. A nationally representative sample of 1,000 U.S. adults was interviewed by landline and cell phone. The survey's margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points.

"Support for nuclear energy continues to be steady," says Ann Bisconti, whose firm conducted the national survey. "Our survey shows that the public wants electric companies and the government to plan for the future and sees nuclear energy as an important part of the future energy mix."

The majority of those surveyed expect electric companies to plan 20 years or more into the future to ensure a well-balanced energy supply. Thirty percent said companies should be planning more than 20 years in advance to meet future electricity demand; 23 percent said 20 years, and 26 percent said 10 years. There is a higher expectation that U.S. policymakers should be planning for future energy needs, with 37 percent saying they should be planning for more than 20 years and 22 percent each saying planning should be 20 and 10 years in advance. Those surveyed gave the country middling grades in its long-range energy planning.

-more-

1201 F Street, NW,
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20004
P: 202.739.8000
nei.org

Americans' Support of Nuclear Energy Remains Strong

Page 2 of 2

Sixty-nine percent of Americans favor the use of nuclear energy while 29 percent are opposed, a split that is relatively unchanged from the February survey. The percentage of Americans who strongly favor nuclear energy increased to 33 percent in this survey from 29 percent in February. Seventy-five percent say electric companies should prepare now so that new nuclear power plants could be built if needed in the next decade.

“Long-term trends reveal a sea change in perceptions of the safety of nuclear power plants,” Bisconti said. “The percentage of Americans giving a favorable rating to the safety of nuclear power plants has doubled from 35 percent in 1984 to 70 percent this September.”

Seventy-seven percent of those surveyed believe that nuclear power plants operating in the United States are safe and secure, a four percentage point increase from last February. The survey shows 84 percent of respondents favor renewing federal operating licenses for nuclear power plants that continue to meet Nuclear Regulatory Commission safety standards.

On the value side, roughly 80 percent of respondents consider reliability, affordability and clean air as top considerations for how electricity is produced, and more than half associate nuclear energy closely with those attributes.

Eighty-five percent of those surveyed agree that “we should take advantage of all low-carbon energy sources, including nuclear, hydro, and renewable energy, to produce the electricity we need while limiting greenhouse gas emissions.”

Nuclear energy facilities operating in 31 states produce electricity for one of every five U.S. homes and businesses. Their reliability is evidenced by the industry’s decade-long trend of industry-leading average capacity factor of 90 percent. Capacity factor is a measure of plant efficiency. Nuclear energy produces more than 60 percent of the electricity generated by carbon-free sources in the United States.

###

The Nuclear Energy Institute is the nuclear energy industry’s policy organization. This news release and additional information about nuclear energy are available at www.nei.org.