

### **N361. Three-Year Capacity Factors Rose Again**

Three-year capacity factors rose again at United States nuclear Power Plants in 1992-94. During that period, 78 of the 108 reactors in commercial operation had design electrical rating (DER) net factors of more than 70 percent, and the median factor was 76.67. In the previous three-year period (1989-91), among the 103 reactors that were commercial then, and are still in service today, 53 had factor over 70, and the median factor was 70.51. Sixty-nine reactors had better factors in 1992-94 than in 1989-91, 32 had poorer factors, and two were unchanged. In terms of electricity production, U.S. nuclear power plants are performing collectively at the highest level in the industry's history. Leading the way in 1992-94 were Southern California Edison Company's San Onofre-2 and GPU Nuclear Corporation's Three Mile Island-1, which were the first U.S. power reactors ever to post DER net factors of more than 90 for a three-year period (91.50 and 90.46, respectively).

Data from the Nuclear Energy Institute indicate record high performance for U.S. reactors in 1994. U.S. nuclear power plants reached an average capacity factor of 75.1 percent in 1994, compare with 72.5 percent in 1993, the fifth consecutive yearly increase.

The median outage in 1994 was 55 days, compared with 78 days in the early 1990s. the top performing plants were Union Electric's Callaway at 102.4 percent capacity factor, Northern States Power's Prairie Island-2 at 101.5 percent, and Niagara mohawk's Nine Mile Point-1 at 99.4 percent. More than two-thirds of the plants operated at 70 percent or better; 29 plants performed at 90 percent or above.

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