

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 13, 2008****News Release 08-09****Brad Peck, Public Information Officer, 509-377-8247****Page 1 of 2****Gary Miller, Communications, 509-377-8728**

## **Temporary Outage Planned at Nuclear Plant**

RICHLAND, Wash. – The region's only nuclear power plant will shut down for approximately five days beginning Saturday morning to allow workers to repair steam line valves at the 1,150 megawatt power plant.

The action at Columbia Generating Station is largely preventative to ensure small leaks don't become larger and force the plant off-line for extended periods according to officials at Energy Northwest, the public power agency that owns and operates the plant 10 miles north of here.

Teams at the plant are repositioning equipment and scheduling additional temporary workers to minimize the length of the maintenance outage. This approach reduces the time the plant is off-line, an important economic consideration since the plant produces more than \$1M worth of electricity per day.

In addition to repairing minor steam leaks, work crews will be adding lube oil to a large water circulating pump and repairing a low-range radiation monitor.

Operators in Columbia's control room will begin reducing power at approximately 4:00 p.m. on Friday, and will have the reactor shut down by about 5:00 a.m. Saturday morning.

Columbia Generating Station produces enough electricity to power a city the size of Seattle. However there will be no impact to homes or ratepayers in the region due to this outage according to Energy Northwest.

All the electricity produced at the nuclear power plant goes to the Bonneville Power Administration which distributes the power throughout the region. BPA made advance preparations to replace the nuclear plant's output with power from other sources; a task made easier by current mild temperatures and high water conditions along the Columbia River hydro system.

Work completed this week at the power plant is expected to reduce the amount of maintenance required when Columbia Generating Station shuts down in May 2009 for a scheduled biennial refueling outage. The every-other-year outage centers around replacing approximately one-third of the nuclear fuel in the reactor and typically lasts about a month. The last refueling outage began in May 2007.

Energy Northwest is a not-for-profit public power Joint Operating Agency headquartered in Richland, Washington. Chartered in 1957, the agency was formed to provide low-cost power for its publicly owned utility members by aggregating needs and building power generation facilities to meet those needs.

The agency currently has 24 public power members; 20 public utility districts and four municipalities. The consortium's nuclear, hydroelectric, wind, and solar projects deliver nearly 1,300 megawatts of reliable, affordable, environmentally responsible electricity to the Northwest power grid; enough to serve a city the size of Seattle.

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Energy Northwest -- [www.energy-northwest.com](http://www.energy-northwest.com)