

New nuclear plant in Idaho?

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Warren Buffett's MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co. informed regulators that it intends to seek a license for a new nuclear power plant in Idaho.

If the company decides to proceed with plans for a site near Boise, it would be the first commercial nuclear power plant in Idaho and the only nuclear facility that MidAmerican owns without partners, Bill Fehrman, president of MidAmerican Nuclear Energy, said in a telephone interview Thursday.

MidAmerican, based in Des Moines, Iowa, could be one of two companies seeking to build a reactor in Idaho. Alternative Energy Holdings Inc. announced plans in December 2006 to build a reactor in the state.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission expects to receive applications by 2009 for as many as 32 new U.S. reactors. NRG Energy Inc., the Tennessee Valley Authority and Dominion Resources Inc. have submitted complete applications so far.

MidAmerican is in talks with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries about using its so-called APWR reactor design at the site, Fehrman said. The design, which is not yet approved by U.S. regulators, provides a net 1,600 megawatts of power, he said.

A decision on whether to proceed with the application will be made in the summer or fall of next year, Fehrman said.

The company is a subsidiary of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc., owns 25 percent of the Quad Cities nuclear power plant in Illinois.

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