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Changes to emergency planning at Sizewell

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Assets



[Sizewell B power station](#)

Plans for new emergency planning arrangements for Sizewell nuclear power stations come together on 1 January 2015. Residents and businesses in Sizewell, Leiston and Aldringham will receive a letter this week about the changes which will see a reduction in the area where urgent counter measures would be required now Sizewell A is de-fuelled.

Key changes in the new offsite emergency plan for Sizewell include –

- A reduction in the area countermeasures would be required in the unlikely event of an offsite release from the Sizewell nuclear sites
- An increase in the area where information is provided to the public

Sizewell power stations' are writing to local people to let them know about the changes. This follows public meetings and regular updates to the Sizewell Stakeholder Group over the last

two years.

For the small number (around 20) of residents and businesses living within 1km of Sizewell power stations the emergency planning procedures are unchanged. They will continue to receive a calendar with offsite nuclear information on countermeasures advice and information from Public Health England.

About 7,000 residents and businesses living within Sizewell, Leiston and Aldringham will also receive information from Public Health England on radiation and health every three years.

Sizewell B Station Director Jim Crawford said: "Nuclear sites are designed, built and operated so the likelihood of an accident is extremely low. Nevertheless, there is a well rehearsed emergency plan in place to protect the public.

"I would encourage anyone with an interest of what we do at Sizewell B to come along to the station's visitor centre to learn more."

Background information

Every nuclear power station in the UK has an area around it where well-established emergency planning procedures are regularly tested in the unlikely event of a release of radiation at the site. Countermeasures, such as sheltering and taking potassium iodate tablets, are put in place for local people within this predefined area. It is important to stress that an incident of this nature is extremely unlikely but emergency planning measures are in place.

The area is defined by calculating risk based on the worst reasonably foreseeable accident that could happen at the power station.

So why are emergency planning arrangements for the Sizewell power stations in Suffolk changing?

The risk of a release of radiation at Sizewell has reduced. Sizewell A has come to the end of its operating life and the fuel has been removed from the reactor, the potential for accidents from this station has significantly reduced so the area where countermeasures could be beneficial has been reduced.

Sizewell B power station is the youngest nuclear power station in the UK with a modern design and multiple barriers designed to protect the public.

Nuclear engineers with decades of experience have looked at thousands of fault sequences and worked through the possibilities of the worse effects.

Every event imaginable is thought through, no stone is left unturned and the possible consequences are carefully examined.

We have provided this information to our industry regulator the Office for Nuclear Regulator and they have taken this into account in determining the new area for emergency planning at Sizewell.

Suffolk's Director of Public Health, NHS England, and Public Health England have considered the need for urgent countermeasures as a result of the reduction in risk from the Sizewell site. It has been determined that the need for urgent countermeasures of taking potassium iodate tablets (stable iodine) and sheltering can now be reduced in line with the reduction in risk, and would now only be required in a 1km zone around Sizewell B

The plan is in line with the revised principles published by the ONR for emergency planning in January 2014.

EDF Energy

EDF Energy is one of the UK's largest energy companies and the largest producer of low-carbon electricity, producing around one-fifth of the nation's electricity from its nuclear power stations, wind farms, coal and gas power stations and combined heat and power plants. The company supplies gas and electricity to 6 million business and residential customer accounts and is the biggest supplier of electricity by volume in Great Britain.

EDF Energy's safe and secure operation of its eight existing nuclear power stations at sites across the country makes it the UK's largest generator of low carbon electricity. EDF Energy is also leading the UK's nuclear renaissance and has published plans to build four new nuclear plants, subject to the right investment framework.

These new plants could generate enough low carbon electricity for about 40% of Britain's homes. They would make an important contribution to the UK's future needs for clean, secure and affordable energy. The project is already creating business

and job opportunities for British companies and workers.

Through Our Better Energy Ambitions, EDF Energy has developed one of the biggest environmental and social programmes of any British energy company.

In 2014 EDF Energy received seven 'Big Ticks' in the Business in the Community (BITC) Responsible Business Awards. In 2013 EDF Energy received the Environmental Leadership for Behavioural Change Award in the national Environment and Energy Awards and was highly commended in the first ever pan European Corporate Social Responsibility Awards scheme for its Sustainable Schools programme – the Pod.

EDF Energy is part of EDF Group, one of Europe's largest power companies. The company employs around 15,000 people at locations across the UK.

To find out more about the UK's energy challenges look at www.edfenergy.com/energyfuture/

In the East of England EDF Energy operates Sizewell B power station which employs 575 staff and 250 contracting partners. EDF Energy has completed Stage One consultation for Sizewell C which would be capable of supplying power to some 5 million homes and would employ 900 staff when operational. As well as generating enough power to serve some 2.5million homes the company also provides gas and electricity to 270,000 customers in this region with over half of those opting for one of the company's Blue+ products which are backed by low-carbon generation. We make sure we buy enough electricity generated from a low-carbon nuclear source to match every unit of electricity we estimate our Blue customers use. EDF Energy is proud to power up some of the largest companies in the UK, including sites for Tesco Stores Limited, Ministry of Defence, Morrisons and Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust right here in the East of England. Following a landmark agreement with Network Rail the company also provides nuclear-backed Blue energy to power up the UK's electric rail network, covering most of the south east of England and the main lines from London to

Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as the Merseyrail network around Liverpool and the Glasgow suburban network.

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Changes to N-plant emergency zone 'to reflect reduced risk'

Richard Cornwell

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New emergency zone arrangements to help people affected by a serious accident at Sizewell B nuclear power station come into effect tomorrow.

About 7,000 homes and businesses in Sizewell, Leiston and Aldringham will receive letters explaining the changes, which experts say reflect the reduced risk following the de-fuelling of Sizewell A.

A comprehensive review of emergency planning has been carried out and the Office for Nuclear Regulation has decided to dispense with its circular 2.4kilometre zone and replace it with one based largely on postcodes.

This will mean that parts of the emergency plan zone will stretch up to about 3km from the power stations and both Leiston and the majority of nearby Aldringham will in

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Jim Crawford
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future be included in it.

People living in this zone will be alerted to any serious incident at Sizewell and be updated with information and advice on taking shelter or evacuation, while those within one kilometre will be issued with potassium iodate tablets (stable iodine) as a counter-measure.

The outcome of the changes is a smaller area where counter-measures would be needed – there are about 20 residents and businesses within one kilometre of Sizewell – and a larger area where information

would be provided to the public.

Despite campaigners' concerns, EDF Energy says the risk of an accident has significantly decreased since Sizewell A stopped operating eight years ago, and the chance of an accident at Sizewell B requiring the off-site emergency plan to swing into operation was "once in every 300,000 years".

Sizewell B station director Jim Crawford said: "Nuclear sites are designed, built and operated so the likelihood of an accident is extremely low.

"Nevertheless, there is a well-rehearsed emergency plan in place to protect the public.

"I would encourage anyone with an interest of what we do at Sizewell B to come along to the station's visitor centre to learn more."

People will also receive information from Public Health England on radiation and health every three years.

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