

Environment & Energy

Holtec to Reapply for Nuke Plant Funds After Federal Rejection

By Zach Bright

Dec. 20, 2022, 10:51 AM

- Company seeking to reopen Palisades plant
 - Will be second application for federal nuclear credits
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Holtec International intends to reapply for federal funds to revive one of Michigan's three remaining nuclear plants after an initial rejection from the Department of Energy.

The energy company is aiming to bring Palisades Nuclear Power Plant, acquired this year from Entergy Corp., back online by submitting a second application to the Department of Energy's Civil Nuclear Credit program. The application process is set to reopen early next year.

"The repowering of Palisades is of vital importance to Michigan's clean energy future," said Pat O'Brien, Holtec's government affairs and communications director.

Before shutting down in the spring, Palisades provided more than 800 megawatts of carbon-free power and employed 600 people in the state.

"Nuclear generation is an essential backstop" for the state's clean energy transition, O'Brien said, adding that state government and local officials are in support of the reapplication effort. Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) supported Holtec's first application.

In the meantime, the company said it will go ahead with its decommissioning process, with a focus on removing and storing spent nuclear fuel.

Holtec's first attempt at securing federal funding was denied in November. No US nuclear plant has successfully restarted after closing.

"It's simply not in the cards," said Paul Gunter, reactor oversight project director for Beyond Nuclear, an organization opposed to Holtec's attempt to restart Palisades. "They would have to go through the process of getting an operating license."

Gunter said Entergy didn't transfer an operating license to Holtec, only a license for the purpose of decommissioning.

California's only operational nuclear plant, Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon Power Plant, received \$1.1 billion in credits from the first round of Energy Department funding.

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