

Press release

Era comes to an end as RWE shuts down last nuclear power plant

- **RWE and nuclear energy closely linked in Germany for around 60 years**
- **Decommissioning of Emsland nuclear power plant ends 35 years of safe and reliable operation**
- **Safe dismantling of the plant to begin after decommissioning license has been granted**

Essen/Lingen, 15 April 2023

As the shift crew on duty disconnected the generator from the power grid on Saturday, 15 April 2023, at 22:37 pm, the Emsland nuclear power plant in Lingen in Lower Saxony – one of three remaining nuclear power plants in Germany – was officially shut down, marking the end of 35 successful years of safe and reliable operation.

The decommissioning of the Emsland nuclear power plant represents the end of an era. Throughout the past 60 years approximately, RWE has operated its nuclear power plants safely and reliably in Biblis, Kahl, Mühlheim-Kärlich, Gundremmingen and Lingen.

Markus Krebber, CEO of RWE AG: “The phasing out of nuclear energy in Germany is a political decision. Before arriving at this point today, nuclear energy was the subject of heated and passionate debates for decades. That chapter is now closed. Now it is important to put all our energy into forging ahead with the construction of hydrogen-ready gas-fired power plants as quickly as possible, in addition to the expansion of renewables, so that security of supply remains guaranteed when Germany ideally also phases out coal in 2030.”

Nikolaus Valerius, CTO for Nuclear Energy on the Executive Board of RWE Power and Technical Director of RWE Nuclear: “Nuclear energy at RWE was a real success story. Our last nuclear power plant in Lingen alone generated electricity safe and carbon-free for 35 years. The output generated at the Emsland nuclear power plant, amounting to more than 390 terawatt hours, could cover Berlin’s current electricity needs for almost 31 years. This would not have been possible without a skilled and motivated operating team. I would like to thank all the employees in our company who have taken good care of the plant every single day around the clock. The team’s performance over the entire operating period has been outstanding.”

RWE

Emsland was one of three remaining nuclear power plants in Germany

In 1982, the starting signal was given for the construction of the Emsland nuclear power plant. After less than six years of construction, the unit started operation on 14 April 1988. Since then, the plant has been generating electricity reliably and safely at all times, with the exception of inspection and maintenance phases.

Compared with other facilities around the world, the Emsland nuclear plant is one of the most powerful and reliable power plants in the industry. Since commissioning, the availability of the plant has been at around 94%.

“For the power plant crew, the safe dismantling of the plant is now a priority. As one of the first measures, the reactor pressure vessel will be opened, the way it was done during previous overhauls. In the following weeks, the fuel elements in the core will be moved underwater to the fuel element storage pool,” Wolfgang Kahlert, the power plant manager, explains. The actual dismantling activities will start once the decommissioning license has been issued by the Environmental Ministry of Lower Saxony. Until then, only preparatory measures for dismantling will be carried out.

The Emsland nuclear plant currently employs around 350 of its own staff. In addition, there are around 150 employees from partner companies who are permanently on duty at the plant. As fewer personnel will be needed for the dismantling activities in the future, the workforce will be gradually reduced over the coming years. This will be done in a socially responsible manner, as is the case at all of RWE’s plants in decommissioning.

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RWE

RWE is leading the way to a green energy world. With an extensive investment and growth strategy, the company will expand its powerful, green generation capacity to 50 gigawatts internationally by 2030. RWE is investing more than €50 billion gross for this purpose in this decade. The portfolio is based on offshore and onshore wind, solar, hydrogen, batteries, biomass, and gas. RWE Supply & Trading provides tailored energy solutions for large customers. RWE has locations in the attractive markets of Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific region. The company wants to phase out coal by 2030. RWE employs around 19,000 people worldwide and has a clear target: to get to net zero by 2040. On its way there, the company has set itself ambitious targets for all activities that cause greenhouse gas emissions. The Science Based Targets initiative has confirmed that these emission reduction targets are in line with the Paris Agreement. Very much in the spirit of the company’s purpose: Our energy for a sustainable life.

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