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## **US : Fort Calhoun-1 Shut Down Permanently After 43 Years Of Operation**

25 Oct (NucNet) : Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) permanently shut down the Fort Calhoun-1 nuclear plant yesterday, ending the 482-MW reactor's 43-years of commercial operation, according to information on the public power district's website. In June 2016, OPPD announced that due to economic considerations it had decided to close the station in Nebraska by the end of 2016. The single-unit pressurized water reactor unit began commercial production of electricity in 1973. A statement said it accounted for 34 percent of OPPD's total electricity generation and nine percent of Nebraska's electricity. OPPD said the decision was "in the best financial interest of the district and its customer-owners". OPPD said the reactor trip and shutdown was uncomplicated and the reactor and personnel functioned as expected. During the reactor trip, control rods are inserted into the reactor core, shutting it down for the final time. OPPD said several factors were behind the decision, including unfavourable market conditions such as historically low natural gas prices and consumers using less energy. OPPD said economies of scale mean that small, single-reactor plants like Fort Calhoun cannot spread costs around like their larger counterparts. The Fort Calhoun reactor is the smallest commercial reactor in the US. "As tough as this decision is, we cannot afford to ignore the changes happening around us. We must look to the future," OPPD president and chief executive officer Tim Burke said. The Washington-based Nuclear Energy Institute called on policymakers to "act now" to ensure nuclear plants are correctly valued for the benefits they bring. OPPD said it will submit a plan to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the first quarter of 2017 to decommission the plant using the Safstor method, in which a nuclear facility is placed in a safe condition and later decontaminated and dismantled, **which can take 60 years to complete.**