

Hurricane Sandy May Score a Direct Hit On Spent Fuel Pools at Nuclear Plant

New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut Nuclear Plants In Path of Storm

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Global Research, October 29, 2012

[Washington's Blog](#)

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Environment](#)

Preface: We hope and expect that the severity of the hurricane is being overblown, and that the nuclear plants in the Northeast will ride out the storm without any incident.

We noted Friday that [more than a dozen nuclear plants are near Hurricane Sandy's path](#).

Nuclear expert Arnie Gundersen [says](#) that there are actually 26 nuclear plants in the path of the hurricane, and that the spent fuel pools in the plants don't have backup pumps (summary via [EneNews](#)):

- You'll hear in the next 2 days, "We've safely shutdown the plant"
- What Fukushima taught us is that doesn't stop the decay heat
- You need the diesels to keep the reactors cool
- 26 plants in the East Coast are in the area where Sandy is likely to hit
- Fuel pools not cooled by diesels, no one wanted to buy them
- If recent refuel, hot fuel will throw off more and more moisture from pool
- Reactor buildings not meant to handle the high humidity
- Fuel pool liner not really designed to approach boiling water, may unzip if water gets too hot
- A lot of problems with allowing fuel pool to over
- Need water in around 2 days if hot fuel in pool
- The only fall-back if power is lost is to let fuel pools heat up

EneNews also [reports](#) that the hurricane is forecast to directly hit the Oyster Creek nuclear plant and that - while the plant is currently shut down for refueling - it still might very well

have new, very hot fuel in the fuel pools:

[Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station](#) is located near New Jersey's shoreline in an area forecast to take a direct hit from Hurricane Sandy: "The current 'track center' for the landfall path is central New Jersey pointing Sandy in a path that would hit Oyster Creek nuclear station." -[SimplyInfo](#)



With [Oyster Creek shut down for refueling starting last week](#), hot fuel may have been placed in the fuel pool quite recently.

The unit at Oyster Creek is the same as Fukushima Daiichi No. 1: "Oyster Creek is one of the oldest US nuclear plants and is the same design as Fukushima unit 1." -[SimplyInfo](#)

Remember, Fukushima reactor number 4 was [shut down for maintenance](#) when the Japanese earthquake hit. And yet the fuel pools at reactor 4 are in such precarious condition that they [pose a giant threat to humanity](#).

Hurricane Sandy is not very intense in terms of wind speed. But the storm is so large, that storm surges could be [11 feet high](#).

Obviously, the path of the hurricane could veer substantially, and may not hit Oyster Creek after all ... weather forecasting is not an exact science. But Gundersen argues that nuclear plants in Pennsylvania and New Jersey are in the most danger given current projections.

As we [noted](#) Friday, the Salem and Hope Creek plants in New Jersey are also near the path of the hurricane, as are the following plants in Pennsylvania:

- Peach Bottom
- Limerick
- Three Mile Island
- Susquehanna

Another concern is the Millstone plant in Connecticut:



EneNews summarizes the situation in a post entitled "[Officials in Connecticut warn of giant 16-foot storm surge, with 15-foot waves on top of that — State's nuclear plant directly exposed on ocean](#)":

[The Hour](#):

In a message sent to residents Sunday afternoon, [Norwalk, Connecticut] Mayor Richard A. Moccia warned of a 16-foot storm surge brought to land by Hurricane Sandy. [...] "I have declared a state of emergency in the City," he said. "Coastal flooding from this event will peak at midnight on Monday night and will be worse than any flooding Norwalk has experienced in recent history. If you have ever experienced flooding before it is likely you will be flooded in this storm." Moccia said that the storm will be equal to a Category 4 hurricane and will produce 16 foot storm surges.

[Westport Now:](#)

"The mood during the meeting was tense as federal officials estimated a 13-foot storm surge for Westport [Connecticut] -- 3 or 4 feet higher than the inundation from Storm Irene last year," a news release said. "This is an unprecedented storm," said [First Selectman Gordon Joseloff], following his team's briefing with federal and state disaster preparedness officials. "This will be a storm of long duration, high winds and record-setting flooding. Take Storm Irene from last year and double it." he said. [...] The town is bracing for at least three waves of flooding, beginning with the high tide at midnight Sunday, the announcement said. [...] An estimated 15-foot wind-driven waves [...] are expected on top of the storm surge.

According to the Weather Channel's latest map, a 6 to 11 foot water level rise is forecast for the Connecticut coastline. This is the highest increase of any area in the US. The state's only nuclear power plant is located directly on the ocean, see marker 'A' below:

 In July, AP [reported](#):

Millstone Power Station, Connecticut's sole nuclear plant, is focusing on how best to guard against flooding and earthquakes to comply with tougher federal standards following the nuclear plant meltdown in Japan last year, the new chief of the power station said in an interview.

Millstone is assessing its ability to withstand flooding and "seismic events," Stephen E. Scace, who took over as site vice president at Millstone in January, told The Associated Press on Thursday. He expects upgrades and installation of new equipment in the next three to four years.

The original source of this article is [Washington's Blog](#)
Copyright © [Washington's Blog](#), [Washington's Blog](#), 2012

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Washington's Blog](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca