

Gulf Power announces closure of Plant Scholz

Mar 22, 2013

Gulf Power Company has announced plans to close its coal-fired electric generating plant in Sneads, Fla., by April 2015.

The company said stricter regulations imposed by the EPA have forced the closure of Plant Scholz, which has operated since 1953. When Gulf Power evaluated the cost to retrofit the plant to meet EPA regulations, the utility decided it was in their customers' best interest to close the plant.

Over the next two years, the plant will continue to operate. At the end of that time, plant employees who are not planning to retire will be transitioned to other jobs within the company.

At one time, Plant Scholz was Gulf Power's flagship plant. Its two generating units can produce a total of 100 megawatts.

"Over time, Plant Scholz has been one of the most reliable plants in the Southern Company system," Stan Connally, Gulf Power President and CEO said. "It's provided affordable, reliable electricity for our customers for 60 years — and helped this region grow."

Even with the closure of the plant, Gulf Power will still be able to generate enough electricity to supply its customers in Northwest Florida. In addition, the utility is part of Southern Company and interconnected with sister companies Georgia Power, Mississippi Power and Alabama Power.

Gulf Power continually evaluates its generation needs, looking at many variables including forecasted demand, cost-effective generation technologies and upcoming regulations.

"To the employees at the plant we say 'thank you' for the outstanding job you've done to serve our customers," said Connally. "And looking toward the future we'll continue to ensure a diverse, affordable generation mix that serves our customers for years to come."

Gulf Power Company is an investor-owned electric utility with all of its common stock owned by Atlanta-based Southern Company. Gulf Power serves more than 430,000 customers in eight counties throughout Northwest Florida. The company's mission is to safely provide exceptional customer value by delivering reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible electricity while strengthening our communities. Visit online at GulfPower.com or on the company's Facebook page, "Gulf Power Company."

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