

## Nuke Chief to OPPD: Do the "Right Thing"

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Despite the fact that the flood threatened nuclear reactor at **Fort Calhoun** has been shut down for over two months, the man in charge of the country's nuclear power confirms that future damage to the core is not off the table.

**Gregory Jaczko**, the chairman of the **Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)**, tells **Nebraska Watchdog** that a meltdown at the **Omaha Public Power District (OPPD)** plant 19 miles north of Omaha is "very unlikely." At the same time though Jaczko notes,

"You can have the potential for fuel to melt if you lose all of your cooling water."

Jaczko eyeballed the Fort Calhoun plant on Monday announcing after his tour that the plant is safe but continues to face "challenges." One of the main challenges dates back nearly two years when the NRC questioned OPPD's ability to handle a potential flood. Indicating that more work needs to be done Jaczko says Fort Calhoun "has made progress in that area."



The **Union of Concerned Scientists (UCC)** has raised serious questions about OPPD's safety consciousness especially as it pertains to flood protection at Fort Calhoun.

Jaczko said today that the swelling **Missouri River** is expected to go no higher than 1,008 feet above sea level, six feet lower than the point at which "safety systems" would fail.

According to the UCC in 2009 the NRC estimated that Fort Calhoun faced "a 100% chance of core reactor damage caused by a flood rising above 1,010 feet." The UCC says that estimate was disputed by OPPD which argued the chance of damage to the core at 1,010 feet was only 19%.

Asked by **Nebraska Watchdog** why the public should have confidence that OPPD can handle the current threat Jaczko said the NRC is keeping a close eye on Fort Calhoun "to make sure that the Omaha Public Power District does the right thing."

Reported by Joe Jordan, [joe@nebraskawatchdog.org](mailto:joe@nebraskawatchdog.org)

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