

Greenwire

5. **NUCLEAR:** Whitman touts technology, says Japan will 'be a very good lesson' (03/14/2011)

How well Japan nuclear power plants perform in the wake of Friday's earthquake will shed light on how safe that country's atomic energy reactors are in a natural disaster, said Christine Todd Whitman, one-time U.S. EPA chief.

"It's going to be a very good lesson in how these things work," said Whitman, who co-chairs the Clean and Safe Energy Coalition. "You can't pretend [the quake] didn't happen. You can't pretend there aren't nuclear reactors. We will be paying attention."

Whitman, who held the top environmental regulatory post during President George W. Bush's administration, said she is trying to recruit new members to her group, which is backed by the nuclear industry. While visiting civic clubs and college campuses last week in Columbia, S.C., she stressed that nuclear energy is safe.

"It's safer than working in a grocery store," she said.

She also stressed that the country needs one nuclear waste repository and said she was bullish that the country would eventually move forward with the Yucca Mountain facility. Reprocessing should also be on the table, she said (Sammy Fretwell, [Columbia \(S.C.\) State](#), March 12). -- AS

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