



Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, N.Y., is said to be responsible for killing fish, eggs, larvae and plants. Photo by Bloomberg News

Nuke plant knocked

BY ABBY LUBY
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

OFFICIALS AT the Indian Point nuclear power plant — which has been called responsible for killing more than a billion fish each year — will have to figure out another way to cool its giant heated steam turbines, a state court has ruled.

The plant sucks in and returns more than 2.5 billion gallons of Hudson River water daily — 2 million gallons per minute — in a system that pulls in and kills fish, eggs, larvae and plant life.

The hot water flushed back into the river is fatal to some 1.2 billion fish every year, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation. The cooling system doesn't use radioactive water from the reactor core.

Last week, acting state Supreme Court Justice Gerald Connolly turned down plant owner Entergy's bid to overturn a year-old DEC decision that fault-

Must fish for an ecofriendlier cooling system

ed Indian Point's water intake system for killing the fish.

The judge said Entergy's appeal was premature, stating: "Petitioner's claims are not ripe for review by the Court at this time."

The ruling now gives the DEC the green light to push for a new cooling system that would reduce fish-killing water usage by 95% at the Westchester County plant.

Entergy spokesman Jerry Nappi said the court's decision determines how the utility company will "ultimately obtain a water-use permit that makes the most sense environmentally and economically for the area around Indian Point."

Entergy has balked at the \$1.4 billion price tag for the new cooling system. Nappi said the plant already has spent more

than \$100 million to protect fish by installing special screens to reduce the number of fish pulled inside.

The DEC estimates a new cooling system would cost \$740 million, and \$145 million a year to run — or 5% to 6% of Entergy's annual gross revenue.

Entergy makes more than \$2 million a day — and more than \$700 million a year — from electricity produced at Indian Point.

The court ruling was a victory for the DEC and the environmental group Riverkeeper, which have been waging court battles with Entergy for years

over the fish kill. Riverkeeper's chief prosecutor is Robert Kennedy Jr.

Indian Point, 24 miles outside the city, is applying to renew its operating license and keep running until 2035. If the license is renewed, Riverkeeper and the DEC say, the power plant would be forced to build a cooling system if it wants to stay open.

Hearings on the new draft water-use permit for the plant, which would mandate closed-cycle cooling, are tentatively scheduled for next year.

Nappi said Entergy is weighing an appeal of the court ruling.

'Petitioner's claims are not ripe for review by the Court.'

Justice Gerald Connolly

Standoff in bank bandit shield battle

BY FRANK LOMBARDI
DAILY NEWS CITY HALL BUREAU

FAMED BANK ROBBER Willie Sutton would scoff at his modern-day counterparts in New York City.

"Most of my bank robbers are substance abusers, petty criminals; [they] have fare-beating summonses," said NYPD Deputy Chief Jeremiah Quinlan, commander of the Special Investigations Division.

"They're not the Willie Suttons of the world."

But while most note-pushing robbers rarely get any money and are often caught, they remain a bone of contention between Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and some City Council members.

A bill backed by Kelly that would require banks to erect bullet-resistant bandit barriers got pummeled at a June 29 hearing by the Public Safety Committee. But it is far from dead.

"No, it's very much alive," says Councilman Daniel Garodnick (D-Manhattan), who led the hearing.

Some Council members — citing arguments by bank lobbyists — indicated they favor giving banks the option of armed bank guards, including off-duty cops.

Kelly said he was willing to accept the option, but insists that banks guarantee they won't drop the cops when the bank robbery spotlight is off.

While bank robberies and robbery attempts in the city have decreased in recent months, there were 444 last year — a 57% jump from 2007.

Most 1,700 bank branches in the city have barriers. Yet the ones without them account for 47% of all robberies.

The main opposition to barriers comes from TD Bank, which swallowed barrier-free Commerce Bank last year. It has 73 local branches, all barrier-free.

The bank contends bandit barriers can provoke bandits to take hostages or threaten customers.

The lobbyist for TD Bank, and previously for Commerce Bank, is Constantinople & Vallone Consulting, whose partners include former City Council Speaker Peter Vallone Sr.

Commerce Bank has paid the firm \$708,750 since 2003, and TD Bank has paid it at least \$25,000 this year.

Vallone's son, Councilman Peter Vallone Jr. (D-Queens), is chairman of the Public Safety Committee, but he recused himself from leading the bank hearing or guiding deliberations on the bill.

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