

# Facts vs. Hype on Indian Point



By Michael Cavanaugh

Recently, Indian Point has been in the news not for something that happened there, but relating to events on the other side of the world in Japan.

Whenever there is a major news story, local media look for a local angle. So the headlines and airwaves have been bombarded with speculation about the potential for a similar crisis to take place here.

As a career Union Millwright, I have had the opportunity to work at Indian Point. I know it to be extremely safe and secure. If it wasn't, I would not permit my union brothers to work there. Owner Entergy has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to enhance the safety, security and operational performance of Indian Point.

Comparing Indian Point to Fukushima with a "can it happen here story" is disingenuous and misleading. Fukushima, located on the Japanese coast, survived the 5th largest recorded earthquake (9.0), and yet the power plant shut down just as it was designed to. It was the 33 foot high tsunami which swept away the diesel fuel supply for the back-up generators, creating the true problem.

Here's a key difference: Indian Point is 35 miles inland, sitting 30 feet above the Hudson River on bedrock. Since the 1970's there have been three extensive earthquake studies about Indian Point. All concluded that earthquakes are not a danger to the plant.

One thing is certain: the sky-is-falling scare tactics that the anti-nuclear activists have used since the Japan tragedy are shameful.

New York's nuclear power plants provide 12% of New York State's power and 25% of the power consumed downstate. Closing Indian Point would be an economic and environmental disaster for our state's ability to compete for jobs and keep our air clean.

Indian Point provides the safe and low cost power that runs our subways, commuter rails, a large percentage of Manhattan's illuminated skyline and countless offices. It's clear that Indian Point is good for New York.

In this period of hysteria it's time to take a step back, and our elected officials should focus on the pursuit of a rational, economically sensible and environmentally friendly state energy policy.

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